

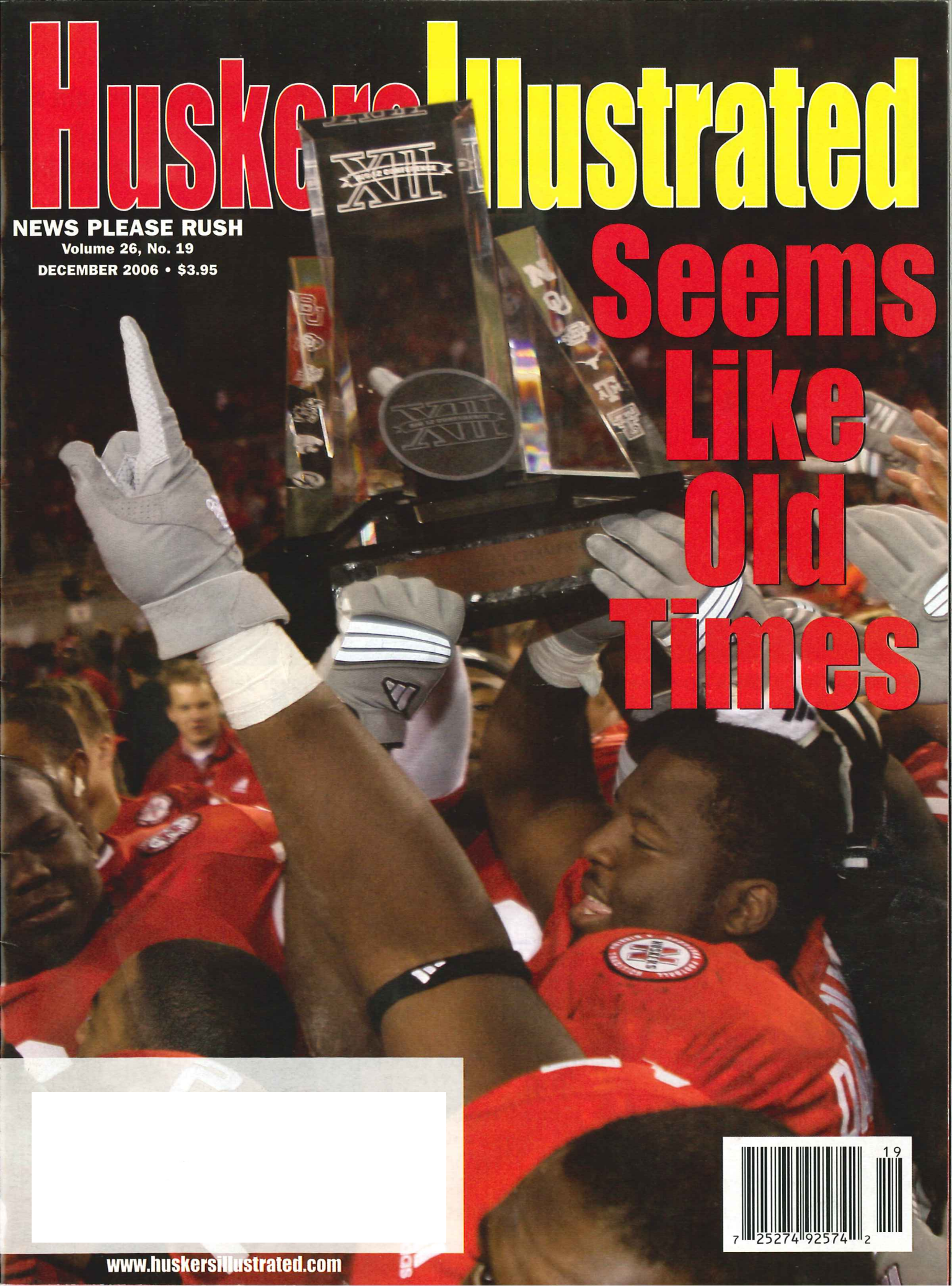
Huskers Illustrated

NEWS PLEASE RUSH

Volume 26, No. 19

DECEMBER 2006 • \$3.95

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Old
Times



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Missouri 13

October 22, 2006	Warrior Challenge Adventure Race	Ashland, NE
January 11, 2007	Panama Trail Run	Panama, NE
February 14, 2007	Panama Adventure Race	Panama, NE
March 14, 2007	Panama Mountain Bike Enduro Race	Panama, NE
April 1, 2007	The Link - Urban Adventure Race*	Lincoln, NE
April 21, 2007	F.O.P 29 Adventure Race**	Wagon Train Lake, NE
May 26-27, 2007	12-Hour Mountain Bike Relay	Branched Oak Lake, NE
June 14, 2007	Run, Row, Rock and Roll Adventure Race	Fairbury, NE
July 21, 2007	Cornhusker State Games Adventure Race	Branched Oak Lake, NE
August, 2007	Norfolk Adventure Race***	Norfolk, NE
September, 2007	Killer Kayak Challenge	Omaha, NE
October 21, 2007	Warrior Challenge Adventure Race	Ashland, NE

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Ready For More

*Huskers complete sweep of North opponents
on their way to Kansas City*



**Brian
HILL**

THE COVER of our August issue featured Zac Taylor along with the headline: "On Zac's Shoulders."

That wasn't to say that the senior quarterback was all Nebraska had, just that his performance was extremely important to the 2006 season and the continued progress of the program.

All Taylor has done is complete 62 percent of his passes for 2,789 yards and 24 touchdowns, with just four interceptions. His two touchdown passes against Colorado Thanksgiving weekend left him tied for the school career record with Tommie Frazier at 43.

In a game which featured a number of trick plays, the NU quarterback was as steady as ever, completing 19-of-28 for 249 yards (with no interceptions). One of the gadget plays featured I-back Marlon Lucky attempting a throwback pass to Taylor. A CU defender was called for pass interference, giving NU a first down at the Colorado 15. Two plays later, the Huskers scored to take the lead for good in the 37-14 victory.

The trick plays almost overshadowed the performances of Taylor and defensive end Adam Carriker and an amazing catch by wide receiver Maurice Purify on the drive mentioned above. The bottom line was a victory that completed a sweep of Big 12 North opponents.

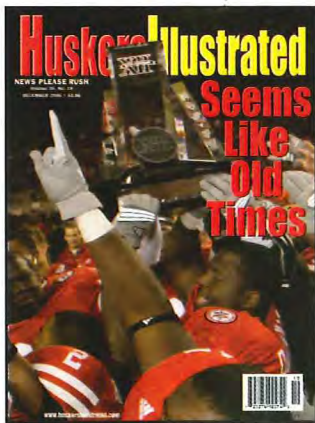
ON THE COVER

Nebraska received the Big 12 North trophy following a 37-14 victory over Colorado the day after Thanksgiving in Lincoln. After completing a sweep of their North Division foes, the Huskers began preparing to play for a bigger prize when they face old rival Oklahoma for the Big 12 Championship Dec. 2. Cover photo by Scott Bruhn.

The Huskers, who had clinched the North Division with a last-second victory two weeks earlier at Texas A&M, had to wait an additional 24 hours to see who they would face in the title game at Arrowhead Stadium in Kansas City.

The expected rematch with Texas didn't materialize when the Longhorns fell at home to Texas A&M, 12-7, for their second straight loss. That put Oklahoma back in business, and the Sooners held off Oklahoma State, 27-21, a day later to win the South Division.

Although it wasn't the matchup most had expected, it gives Norman, Okla., product Taylor another shot at his hometown school, where his father, Sherwood, played defensive back.



Not surprisingly, Nebraska hasn't had many recruits from Oklahoma. Prominent on that list is 1992 Outland Trophy winner Will Shields, a member of the 1989 recruiting class, which is the subject of this week's installment of "Recruiting Through the Years." There's much, much more.

Junior tight end J.B. Phillips is featured in "Spotlight," and freshman wide receiver Menelik Holt answers "10 Questions" in this issue of Huskers Illustrated.

We also have an update on the injury-plagued NU basketball team, which was off to a 3-0 start under new coach Doc Sadler, including a 73-61 triumph over intrastate rival Creighton, which entered the game ranked 20th.

The mention of rival brings us back to the Big 12 Championship game against the Sooners. For so many years, the two met in a showdown at the end of the regular season — usually on Thanksgiving weekend — until the Big 12 Conference came along, and the rivals were scheduled to meet just two out of every four years . . . unless they both qualified for the title game.

It finally happened. ■

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Huskers Illustrated

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10 RECRUITING THROUGH THE YEARS

Tom Osborne didn't have a sales pitch, really, when he visited Trev Alberts (above) in Cedar Falls, Iowa. The Nebraska coach's approach was up-front and honest, according to Alberts. *By Mike Babcock*

NEXT ISSUE

The Big 12 Championship review/Bowl preview edition will be mailed Dec. 18. Check for updates at huskersillustrated.com.

Numbers Game

The numbers don't add up, not literally anyhow. Nebraska men's basketball coach Doc Sadler's first recruiting class includes seven players — count 'em, seven. But only three scholarships will be open after this season, and one of those could be filled, too, if Roburt Sallie were to get his issues with the NCAA clearinghouse resolved. That doesn't appear likely at this point. But you never know.

Sadler acknowledged the discrepancy in announcing a class of four junior college and three high school players. "I know that some of you, contrary to what some may believe, can count," he said, joking with reporters. "So you're sitting there saying, 'Why seven guys when you may have only four (three) scholarships?' What I would tell you there is, all of those things always take care of itself."

Sadler also indicated he was "really, pretty confident" he would add to the class, further confusing the numbers. "But I'll address all of that come first day of class next year," he said.

Regardless of the mathematical discrepancy, there is little question that what Sadler did in recruiting was designed to quickly add up the progress in the program. The class includes a pair of high-scoring junior college players in Steve Harley and Rishawn Norwood, the last to cast his lot with Sadler.

Harley, the No. 4 shooting guard in the country according to The Sporting News Preseason Yearbook, averaged 20.7 points at South Plains (Texas) College as a freshman, while Norwood averaged 27.2 points at Mt. San Antonio (Calif.) College to lead the California junior college ranks in scoring.

In fact, all of the recruits can score. "The thing I think you will find (is) I will go for a scorer more than an athlete," said Sadler. "I don't know what to do with a guy that can't score."

"So I will always lean toward guys that will put the ball in the basket."

Apparently, scoring trumps size even. "Size to me doesn't do you any good unless they can play. I think you can do more with guards that can play than with size that can't play," he said.

Shang Ping, the biggest member of the class at 6-foot-10, 230 pounds, has the bloodlines to play. Both of his par-



Steve Harley



Shang Ping



Cookie Miller



Alonzo Edwards

ents played professional basketball in China. Ping, who played at Illinois Central Community College, is "probably one of the most focused kids I've ever seen in my life," Sadler said.

"He's come to the United States for two reasons, to get an education and to play basketball, and nothing else. His coach will tell you the same thing. It doesn't matter if it's 5 o'clock in the morning or 10 o'clock at night. He's either in the gym or he's in the library. As I told him when he was here, 'Man, you're going to miss out on a lot of good times. But he reminded me that's the reason he was here.'"

Ping is the tall of it, and Cookie Miller is the short of it, at 5-7 and 165 pounds.

"Obviously, when you get to that type of size, you've got to be different," said Sadler. "And I truly believe he's different. I think he's a guy that will compete at the highest level in the Big 12."

The class is guard-heavy, which also adds up as far as Sadler is concerned.

"I think you're going to find out as time goes, I'm a strong believer in having great guards," he said. "I think that's the biggest key. And I do think we signed some good ones."

You can't ever have too many guards, in my opinion."

SADLER'S SIGNEES

Alex Chapman, 6-9/225, Canby, Ore.
(Canby High/Sheridan College)

Missed the end of his senior season in high school and will have three seasons of eligibility at Nebraska after playing one season at Sheridan College . . . averaged 16 points and eight rebounds in 13 games as a senior . . . brother Clinton signed a letter of intent with Texas.

Alonzo Edwards, 6-7/215, Houston
(Klein Forest High)

First of the high school players to commit to Nebraska, averaged 18 points, 12 rebounds and three blocked shots as a junior . . . ranked among the top 25 players in Texas . . . can run the floor and is probably the best athlete in the class, according to Sadler.

Steve Harley, 5-11/170, Temple Hills, Md.
(Marriott High/South Plains College)

Preseason first-team NJCAA All-American after receiving All-America honorable mention as a freshman for a 24-8 team . . . an explosive scorer who can create shots but he also can "guard with all of them on the defensive end," according to South Plains assistant Charles Harral.

Cookie Miller, 5-7/165, Charleston, W.Va.
(Capital High/Harmony Community)

Heir apparent to Charles Richardson at point guard, averaged 17 points and nearly 12 assists last season at Harmony Community, a prep school in Cincinnati . . . played with top-10 national recruits O.J. Mayo and Bill Walker for the D-1 Greyhounds in Cincinnati during the summer . . . has "extraordinary ability," according to Sadler.

Rishawn Norwood, 6-3/185, Akron, Ohio
(Buchtel High/Mt. San Antonio College)

Shot nearly 90 percent from the free throw line and better than 50 percent from the field at Mr. SAC last season . . . scored 50 points in one game . . . all-state as a senior at Buchtel High, averaging 25 points, eight rebounds and four assists . . . wing or two-guard, slasher, accustomed to up-tempo style.

Shang Ping, 6-10/230, Harbin, China
(Illinois Central Community College)

Averaged 14.5 points and 4.5 rebounds as a freshman last season . . . spent time in the Chinese national basketball school, played one year in New Zealand and then enrolled at The Winchendon School in Massachusetts before moving to Peoria, Ill.

Brandon Richardson, 6-0/160
(Hawthorne, Calif. (Hawthorne High))

Poised to break his high school's career-scoring record, after averaging 22.5 points, 5.5 rebounds, 3.7 assists and 3.0 steals as junior . . . three-year starter and league MVP, All-California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) first-team recognition . . . point guard or combo-guard, highly competitive. ■

Quick Hits

VOLLEYBALL RECRUITING

Four high school athletes, all ranked among the nation's top-50 seniors by Prepvolleyball.com and all from winning programs, signed letters of intent. "You are always looking for people who know how to win," coach John Cook said in announcing the signings. "That is an intangible that you can't teach."

"We will be expecting some of them to be able to contribute for us next season."

Brooke Delano	MB	6-4	Bellevue, Neb. (West)
Lindsey Licht	RS	6-5	Aurora, Colo. (Grandview)
Tara Mueller	OH	6-0	Scottsdale, Ariz. (Desert Mountain)
Danielle Minch	OH	6-1	Sterling, Colo. (Sterling)

IT'S ACADEMIC

Two-time volleyball All-American, and Academic All-American a year ago, Sarah Pavan was named to the ESPN The Magazine Academic All-District VII first team, while Tracy Stalls and Dani Busboom were included on the second team, and Amanda Gates was on the third team. Gates was the only sophomore among the 18 honored.

Sarah Pavan, Jr., Kitchener, Ontario, Canada, 4.0 GPA, Biochemistry
Tracy Stalls, Jr., Denver, Colo., 3.96, Individualized Program Studies
Dani Busboom, Sr., Cortland, Neb., 3.55, Communication Studies
Amanda Gates, So., Columbus, Neb., 4.0, Communication Studies

The four were among eight Huskers who earned Academic All-Big 12 recognition. The others were senior Dani Mancuso, junior Maggie Griffin and sophomores Jordan Larson and Rachel Schwartz.

BASEBALL RECRUITING

Coach Mike Anderson signed 10 players, five of them from Nebraska. The class includes eight high school athletes and four pitchers. "Our first priority as always was to target the state, and this year's senior class has a number of players who will be able to come in and help our program," said Anderson.

"I think the thing that stands out about this class is their physical size and ability."

Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	B/T	Hometown (school)
Clay Cuno	OF	6-3	215	R/R	New Bloomfield, Mo. (Fort Scott CC)
Jacob Diekmann	LHP	6-4	180	L/L	Wymore, Neb. (Cloud County CC/Doane)
Matt Freeman	RHP	6-1	175	R/R	Elkhorn, Neb. (Elkhorn)
Joe Huwer	C/OF	5-11	180	L/R	Boise, Idaho (Timberland)
Dan Johnston	INF	6-1	175	R/R	Papillion, Neb. (Papillion-LaVista)
Ben Kline	INF	6-2	165	R/R	Omaha, Neb. (Central)
Tyler Rank	C/RHP	6-4	235	L/R	Rochester, Minn. (Mayo)
David Stewart	OF	6-6	230	L/R	St. Louis, Mo. (St. John Vianney)
Cameron Robulack	1B	6-3	215	L/R	Toronto, Ontario (Silverthorn Collegiate)
Sean Yost	RHP	6-6	185	R/R	Lincoln, Neb. (Southwest)

PRESEASON ALL-AMERICANS

Husker juniors Tony Watson and Ryan Wehrle have earned pre-season All-America recognition from the National Collegiate Baseball Writers Association. Watson, a left-handed pitcher, was included on the first team, while Wehrle, a shortstop, made the third team.

Watson was 10-2 with a 2.78 earned-run average, ranking among the Big 12 leaders in wins (fourth) and ERA (third), as well as opponents' batting average (.236). The Baltimore Orioles selected him in the 17th round of the major league draft but opted to return to Nebraska.

Wehrle was the first Husker shortstop in 21 seasons to earn first-team all-conference recognition last season, hitting a team-high .367 with eight home runs and 49 runs-batted-in. He was an 18th-round selection of the Cincinnati Reds in the major league draft.



Tony Watson



Ryan Wehrle

SOFTBALL RECRUITING

Coach Rhonda Revelle signed four high school players, two from California and two from Kansas. "We have high expectations for the 2007 class and how it will impact our program on the field, in the classroom and in the community," she said. "This is an outstanding group of student-athletes."

Julianne Brechtel	INF	Fullerton, Calif. (Sunny Hills)
Ashley Guile	C/1B	Olathe, Kan. (East)
Abby Hughes	UTL	Olathe, Kan. (North)
Tori Tyson	RHP	Corona, Calif. (Corona)

CROSS COUNTRY FINISH

The Husker women's cross country team finished fourth (out of 24) at the NCAA Midwest Regional, led by Ari Goldstein, whose 21:48.92 over the 6K course at Falcon Heights, Minn., was good for 22nd individually. It was the fourth time in seven competitions that Goldstein led Nebraska.



Ari Goldstein

The Huskers' other finishers: Kim Pancoast (26), 21:52.82; Natalja Zarcenko (28), 21:56.42; Jennifer Pancoast (29), 21:57.32; Channing Anseth (36), 22:08.82; Betsy Miller (48), 22:25.87; Joslyn Dalton (55), 22:35.82. Miller and Dalton were not included in Nebraska's team scoring.

The men's team finished 13th in the competition, with Brian Parr the top finisher at 38th, running the 10K course in 32:04.74. The other Nebraska finishers were: Kyle Custer (77), 33:13.19; Alec Maduza (92), 33:48.39; Bryce Dickmeyer (95), 33:57.94; Ethan Luebke (125), 35:25.34.

MEN'S GOLF RECRUITS

Coach Bill Spangler signed three high school recruits to fill out a team that will lose four seniors following the spring season, which is scheduled to begin on Feb. 19-20.

Mike Coatman	Lincoln, Neb. (Southwest)
Tyler Parsloe	Highlands Ranch, Colo. (ThunderRidge)
Andrew Wyatt	Lake Forest, Ill. (Lake Forest)

WRESTLING RECRUITS

Coach Mark Manning signed three high school athletes during the early-signing period. "All three have excelled in wrestling not only at the state level but also at the national level," he said. "These are outstanding young men that will represent Nebraska in a first-class manner."

Chris Hacker	*152	El Reno, Okla. (El Reno)
Tucker Lane	*215	Nucla, Colo. (Nucla)
Andy Pokorny	*112	Bennington, Neb. (Bennington)

*Weight at which he competed last season

GOLFER OF THE MONTH

Husker true freshman Kate White was named the Big 12 Women's Golfer of the Month for October, winning her first tournament as a collegian, the Bronco Invitational at Boise, Idaho. She also tied the school single-round record in the process, with a 4-under-par 67 in the opening round. Later in the month, she finished in a tie for 21st at the 17-team Auburn Tiger-Derby Invitational.

Nebraska junior Elli Brown was the conference Women's Golfer of the Month for September.

TIMKO SEMIFINALIST

Husker senior Brittany Timko, the three-time Big 12 Soccer Player of the Year, is among 15 semifinalists for the National Soccer Coaches Association of America (NSCAA) Player-of-the-Year award, the Hermann Trophy. The recipient of the award, sponsored by the Missouri Athletic Club, is determined in a vote of NSCAA Division I member coaches and will be announced on Dec. 2.

Timko and North Carolina's Heather O'Reilly are semifinalists for a third time.

Timko is among just 35 players in NCAA history to score at least 40 goals and have at least 40 assists, finishing with 41 and 42 respectively. She had 11 goals and seven assists this season. ■



Brittany Timko

The Right Quarterback At The Right Time

There was little doubt NU would offer a scholarship, and none after Callahan visited Taylor



**Mike
BABCOCK**

EXHIBIT A: Zac Taylor's response to Terrence Nunn's lost fumble trying to pick up a first down with 2:17 remaining in the Texas game: "I can't say I wouldn't have done the same thing if I hadn't been in the same situation. I fumbled early in the game. It's just tough for him. He'll bounce back."

EXHIBIT B: Taylor's response to J.B. Phillips' drop of an almost-certain touchdown pass early in the third quarter of the Missouri game: "There's nothing you have to say. You know exactly how he feels. I remember a play against Texas Tech last year, I had Terrence (Nunn) wide open, and anybody in the stadium could have hit him, and I missed him. So I know exactly how he feels."

WITH TIME ENOUGH, you could go through an alphabet of exhibits, reflecting a personality trait that has served Taylor well the past two seasons. Beyond the record-setting passing, the decision-making and understanding of Bill Callahan's offense that have made him the right quarterback at the right time, Taylor has been a leader, not only by example but also with empathy for those around him.

Question a teammate's mistake, and Taylor will interject his own shortcomings. When the offensive line has failed to protect him, he has always taken the blame. (Consider that exhibit C.)

"I think that's a tribute to his leadership," offensive coordinator and quarterbacks coach Jay Norvell said on the Monday before the Colorado game. "He's always taking it on himself."

"He's never looking to somebody else to point the finger. I think he's earned the respect of his teammates that way because they see he's going to stand up and take responsibility when he does make a mistake. He's a special guy that way, and we figured that's the kind of person he was."

Norvell was the one who found Taylor at Butler County (Kan.) Community College, where he had transferred after two seasons — the first as a redshirt — at Wake Forest.

"Found" might be the wrong word, though, because Taylor wasn't lost, exactly. A few Division I schools, mid-majors, knew where he was. Marshall, for example. Had Nebraska, with Norvell's endorsement, not come in late, he probably would have gone to Marshall.

"But once Nebraska comes calling, it's kind of game-over from there," said Taylor. "You've got to take the visit. And once they get you here in the stadium, it's hard to say no."

There was little doubt the Cornhuskers would offer a scholarship, based on what the coaches saw on videotape, and none after Callahan went to El Dorado, Kan., to visit Taylor.

Taylor admits having been nervous. At least, "I think I was," he said. "You've got Coach Callahan coming in. I just knew he coached in the Super Bowl, and so when you see

him walk around that corner and come in the office, it's a little bit different than just kind of a normal coach."

Callahan was similarly impressed with Taylor. The two sat down for an interview — check that, for a conversation — about what Butler County was doing offensively. Taylor "broke down the whole offense for me, gave me every play, told me what his reads were," Callahan said.

"When a young man can do that after only being in a program for one year, I knew we had something. It was just a matter of grooming him into our terminology and watching him grow."

Taylor hasn't just grown, "he's flourished. On top of everything else he just competes like crazy. He's a tough competitor. He's relentless," said Callahan. "He's the guy you want behind the controls."

Even so, many thought Taylor was recruited simply to provide competition for incumbent Joe Dailey in the spring of 2005, while the Cornhuskers waited for heralded Harrison Beck's arrival.

Taylor provided competition, all right. Dailey transferred following practice that spring, and Beck came and went, while Taylor passed his way into the Nebraska record book. The senior from Norman, Okla., has become the face of the program, representing it with modesty and class.

He is perfect in that role "because he's one of those pretty-boy, up-tight, always-does-the-right-thing kind of guys. He's always in that mode," junior middle linebacker Corey McKeon said. "He's never in a bad mood. He's never negative. He's always positive. He's always saying the right thing."

Taylor says the right things because that's his nature, not because he's expected to.

"As a quarterback, in this kind of program, for this team, for the fans and everything, it's a perfect role for him," said McKeon. "He's really stepped into the limelight perfectly."

"He's a great asset to this team. Just his attitude alone is a great asset. He does that quarterback stuff pretty well, too, but he's a nice kid. He's fun to have around."

Taylor won't be around much longer. Only the Big 12 championship game and a bowl remain for Cornhusker fans to appreciate his contribution in a time of transition.

Without him, the program wouldn't be where it is now.

Taylor won't say that. But Callahan will, and did before the Colorado game. In two years' time, "he has allowed us to accelerate this program faster than any player I've ever been around."

And he's done it with character as well as ability. ■



**Zac Taylor has broken
NU passing records in
just two seasons.**

Mike Babcock is a former sports columnist for the Lincoln Journal Star. He has covered Nebraska football for nearly 30 years. Mike can be reached at MBABCOCK1@neb.rr.com or P.O. Box 6782, Lincoln, NE 68506.

A Better Way?

Oklahoma's Stoops suggests crowning regular-season champion



Curt McKEEVER

BOB STOOPS REALLY WASN'T experiencing a sour-grapes moment.

After all, the one time his Oklahoma football team got beat out of four trips to the Big 12 Conference championship, in 2003, the Sooners still wound up playing for a national championship.

Anyway, there Stoops was a few weeks ago, suggesting that perhaps there's a better way to make the Big 12 feel more like a cohesive family.

"It would probably be great if you threw out the Big 12 Championship Game and just crown your (regular-season) champion and play everybody like the Big Ten does, or the Pac-10," he said. "You could play an extra conference game, get away from the divisions and mix up the teams you are not playing each year."

Mind you, this wasn't a guy grandstanding for his own selfish cause. If that were Stoops' intent, he would likely have offered an alternative to the current North-South divisional setup that decides which teams advance to the championship.

Maybe some day that plan will change. But he shouldn't put much stock in the Big 12 ever giving up its end-of-the-year title bout.

As Colorado coach Dan Hawkins told the Denver Post, "It's America, man. It's all about the dollar. When you have that championship game, and that thing generates X amount of dollars for the entire conference, I don't know how you do away with it."

Four of the first 10 championship games have produced upsets, and three of those results ended national title dreams (for Nebraska in 1996, Kansas State in 1998 and Texas in 2001).

The league's stance still makes it clear it considers the revenue rewards from playing a championship to outweigh the risk that one of its teams will get bumped out of providing the schools with a bigger payday.

The last two years, no such drama has existed, as Texas and Oklahoma scored blowout wins against Colorado to clinch spots in the BCS Championship. Colorado, which did avenge a regular-season loss to the Longhorns to win the 2001 title, also lost the 2002 contest, and in its three championship defeats was outscored 141-13.

Of course, those results only strengthened the notion of the South's superiority.

"You have Texas, you have Oklahoma and you've got A&M. By and large, other than Nebraska, when you start looking at budgets, facilities, salaries and everything along the way, it's pretty clear-cut where the strength is,"

Hawkins told the Post. "I don't think there's any doubt. In every league, whether it's high school, college or the pros, you have those scenarios where these are the guys who are the Yankees."

This season, the "Bronx Bombers from the South" won 13 of the 18 inter-division games. And so when the North went 2-0 in the final two of those matchups on Nov. 11, some shock waves were felt throughout the league.

Kansas State's 45-42 upset of Texas and Nebraska's 28-27 victory at Texas A&M probably weren't enough to prove the balance of power is shifting divisional lines. Baylor, after all, did go 3-0 against North opponents.

But perhaps the Wildcats' and Huskers' victories illustrated that there isn't as big of a talent gap from one side to the other as some think.

North champion Nebraska's win in College Station kept the Huskers from going 0-3 against South opponents this season. And while you could argue they got lucky to go 1-2, Texas, which needed to beat A&M in its regular-season finale to advance to the league championship, required a lot more luck to come out of Lincoln with a victory. And without that result — which came about only because the Longhorns got a turnover that prevented the Huskers from running out the clock — they'd be looking at a 1-2 mark against North opponents.

Meanwhile, Kansas State produced the only winning record (2-1) by a North team against the South. And if not for a flurry in the final four minutes of its win against Oklahoma State, the Wildcats would have been on the south side of .500.

"This conference, there's such great parity now, and I think there's parity across college football, so it doesn't come as a surprise or shock to me," Nebraska coach Bill Callahan said of the latest wins produced by his team and Ron Prince's. "To do what they did, that's great. But I think it's to the point, and we said it last year, that it was cyclical, and I think that there's now evidence to back that up."

"I remember Colorado beating Tech, and K-State beating Okie State at home. And I thought that the Missouri-Oklahoma game (a 26-10 win by the Sooners) was really tight, so . . ."

You can draw a lot of conclusions. Whatever those are, let's hope the 70-3 and 42-3 results of the last two Big 12 championships soon become a forgotten part of the league's history — because the title game's not likely to disappear any time soon. ■



Bob Stoops has led OU to three wins in the Big 12 title game.

Curt McKeever is a sportswriter for the Lincoln Journal Star. In addition to reporting on football, he is the primary beat writer for baseball. Curt can be reached at cmckeever@journalstar.com

'Not the

Up-front, honest recruiting approach worked for Iowa product Alberts

By Mike Babcock

Trev Alberts' parents weren't sure how interested Nebraska was. Cornhusker assistant John Melton had visited. But Tom Osborne had never come to Cedar Falls, Iowa. If Nebraska had such high regard for his son, Ken Alberts said to Melton, then why hadn't Osborne visited, too?

Soon after, Osborne flew to Cedar Falls to meet Trev and his family.

Before they went out to eat, at the nicest restaurant in town (with a table covered by a special red tablecloth), Trev's mom, Linda, took pictures to preserve the moment.

When the photos came back, they showed that Osborne was bigger than Trev. Osborne looked like the one who was going to be playing football, his parents said. They had a good laugh.

The visit had been no laughing matter, however. Osborne was a good guest but businesslike. He didn't have a sales pitch, really. His approach was up-front and honest.

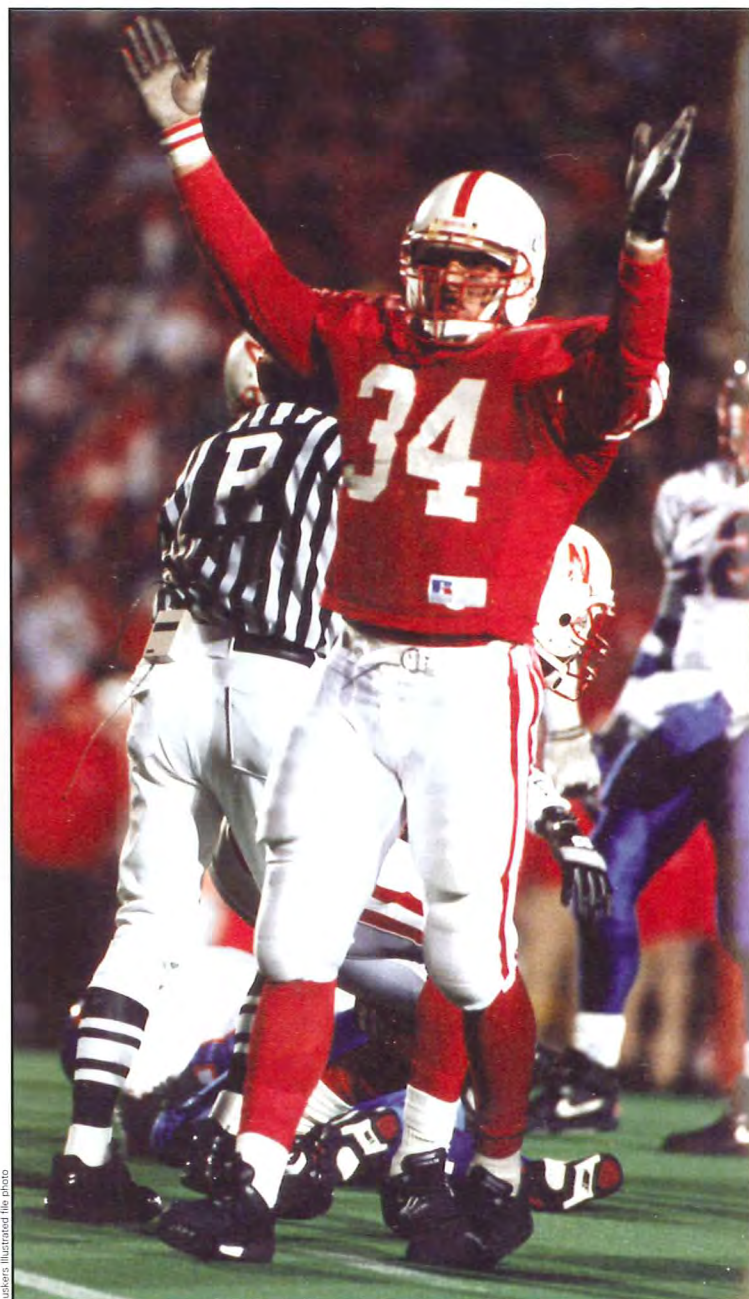
"He just said, 'The great news is, we have a great university. You'll get a degree, and you'll get the opportunity to compete for playing time.' That was it," Alberts recalled years later.

"That was what was promised to me. He told my mother and father they would take good care of me (at Nebraska). We wouldn't practice on Sunday. If my spiritual life was important, I'd be given an opportunity to go to church. He wouldn't demand anything of me then."

Osborne also promised that Nebraska would do everything it could for him educationally and that he would have fun playing football because the team would win some games along the way.

"That was the promise I was made," said Alberts.

Nowadays, "kids want to be promised playing time immediately and be promised that they will get to the



Trev Alberts proved to be a difference-maker. He had 21 tackles for losses as a senior in 1993.

NFL," Alberts said. "With him (Osborne), the opposite was true."

Osborne also emphasized that there were no shortcuts and that character counted.

"I believe what we did at Nebraska was not the easy

Easy Way'



In addition to being a consensus All-American and the Big Eight Defensive Player of the Year, Trev Alberts was Nebraska's first Butkus Award winner. He received the award from Chicago Bears' Hall of Famer Dick Butkus (above) after the 1993 season.

way," said Alberts. "The easy way was to go out and just take anybody with some talent. Well, I think Coach Osborne was pretty consistent about how important it was (that) our team reflect the personality of the state.

"He understood we weren't like Miami or Florida State."

And that understanding influenced Osborne's recruiting approach. Nebraska paid little or no attention to recruiting analysts and blue-chip lists. Instead, it identified needs and players who would fit those needs. Those on the "A" list, five or six rank-

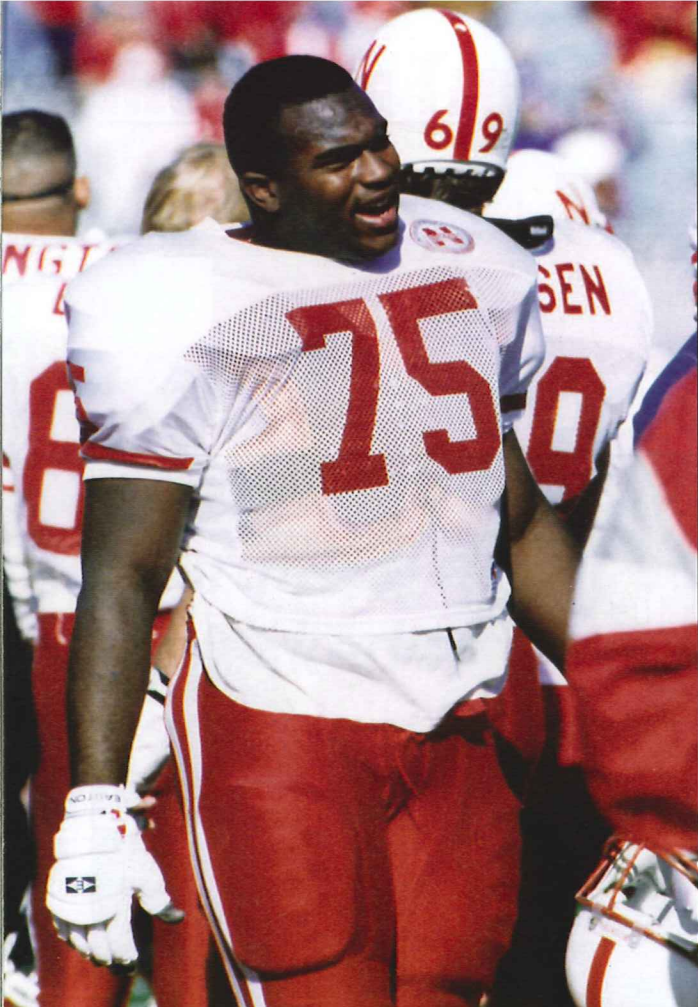
Twelfth in a Series

ordered at a particular position, were the best.

Failing to get "A" list players, the Cornhuskers would then go to a "B" list. "Of course, that all goes back on our judgment. If we don't see things accurately, then that doesn't mean much," Osborne said at the time. "But assuming we know what we're doing, that's a very good percentage of top people."

Nebraska didn't have to go to its "B" list in assembling Alberts' recruiting class. All those who signed letters of intent in 1989 were on the "A" list, more than half atop their positions.

The Cornhuskers apparently saw things accurately in matching players with needs in 1989. All but five of 22 players announced on signing day earned at least one letter, with half earning at least three. And one of the 22 never enrolled because of Proposition 48 eligibility requirements. Daryl Green, a running back-defensive back from West Covina,



Huskers Illustrated file photo

Will Shields (left) was Oklahoma's high school lineman of the year as a senior and went on to win the Outland Trophy at Nebraska. **Derek Brown (right)**, a USA Today and Parade All-American, was a two-time all-conference selection at NU.

Calif., went to Hawaii instead.

The class was unusual in that it included only three in-state players: Mike Anderson from Grand Island, David Noonan from Lincoln and Lance Lundberg from Wausa.

Lundberg, a lineman, played eight-man football.

All but one of the 22 were high school players, and a third of those were from Texas, including three from Dallas-area Lakeview Centennial: Byron Bennett, Chad Hunter and Mike Jefferson.

Derek Brown, a Prop 48 like Green, was the most prominent member of the class from the standpoint of recruiting analysts. The running back from Servite High in Anaheim, Calif., was the SuperPrep "Player of the Year" in the Far West and was a USA Today and Parade All-American.

He rushed for 2,301 yards and scored 30 touchdowns as a senior.

Lance Larson, a lineman from Moorhead, Minn., also was a Parade All-American as well as the Gatorade Player of the Year in Minnesota. Recruiting analyst Max Emfinger

Recruiting list, 1989				
Player, Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Hometown	Letters
Trev Alberts, LB-FB	6-4	210	Cedar Falls, Iowa	1990-91-92-93
Mike Anderson, LB	6-2	208	Grand Island, Neb.	1990-91-92-93
Byron Bennett, K-P	5-11	175	Rowlett, Texas	1990-91-92-93
Troy Branch, LB	6-2	230	Camden, N.J.	1990-91-92-93
Lorenzo Brinkley, RB	6-0	185	St. Louis, Mo.	1991-92-93
Derek Brown, RB	5-11	175	La Habra, Calif.	1990-91-92
Marvin Callies, QB	6-0	192	East Bernard, Texas	
Howard Carter, OLB	6-4	205	Dodge City, Kan.	
Bart Furrow, OL/DL	6-4	225	Fort Collins, Colo.	1992-93
Daryl Green, CB/RB	5-10	170	West Covina, Calif.	
Chad Hunter, SS	6-1	170	Garland, Texas	
Jerry Irons, NG	6-4	260	The Woodlands, Texas	1991
Mike Jefferson, NG	6-2	258	Rowlett, Texas	1990
Lance Larson, OL	6-6	219	Moorhead, Minn.	
Lance Lundberg, OL	6-4	245	Wausa, Neb.	1991-92-93
David Noonan, NG	6-3	236	Lincoln, Neb.	1990-91-92-93
Vernon Powell, WB	5-10	160	East St. Louis, Ill.	1990-91
John Reece, FS	6-0	190	Houston	1989-91-92-93
Will Shields, OL	6-2	243	Lawton, Okla.	1989-90-91-92
*Omar Soto, FB	5-11	225	Miami, Fla.	1990-91
Billy Wade, TE	6-5	215	Houston	1992-93
Darren Williams, LB	6-2	215	Chicago	1991-92-93
State breakdown: Texas 7, Nebraska 3, Missouri 2, California, Colorado, Florida, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, New Jersey, Oklahoma.				
*Junior college transfer				

rated Larson, the Minnesota Lineman of the Year, as the No. 26 high school offensive tackle in the country.

Will Shields, Nebraska's second recruit from Oklahoma in as many

years, also was his state's high school lineman of the year, according to the Daily Oklahoman.

The three in-state players were the fewest ever in a Cornhusker recruit-

ing class and none were from Omaha. Nebraska hadn't been shut out in recruiting in the state's largest city in 20 years. The biggest loss was Creighton Prep lineman Junior Bryant, who opted for Notre Dame.

Omaha Central's Abe Hoskins made an oral commitment to the Cornhuskers but changed his mind just before letter-of-intent signing day and picked Purdue, instead.

Nebraska's recruiting class earned national respect, being ranked from fifth to eighth. "It would be a good guess to say Nebraska has done its work more efficiently than the other 104 schools in Division I in the country," SuperPrep's Allen Wallace told Huskers Illustrated.

Tom Lemming, then of Prep Report, offered a similar assessment.

"When you peg the players you want and then you get them as early as Nebraska did, you know that's from hard work, good planning and a solid effort," he told the magazine.

The Cornhuskers had done such a good job of recruiting that they could have taken 35 of the nation's top players if not limited by the NCAA scholarship maximum of 25.

As usual, Osborne held back some scholarships for walk-ons. Several players who walked on in 1989 would earn multiple letters, among them Gerald Armstrong, Ken Mehlin and Bruce Moore.

In addition to contributing to the team, the in-state walk-ons in particular helped motivate the scholarship recruits, according to Alberts. "I see these kids, walk-on kids, some of whom never saw the field . . . but they were so happy to just get to run out on the field in practice," he said.

"Then he (Osborne) would sort of sprinkle in these few difference-makers."

Emfinger rated Alberts the No. 33 inside linebacker recruit in the country, lower than Darren Williams (No. 27) and Troy Branch (No. 12). But he proved to be a difference-maker. In fact, his pass-rushing ability was a significant factor in Nebraska's decision to change its base defensive alignment from a "50" front to the 4-3 that was instrumental in winning three national championships.

Alberts was credited with 21 tackles for losses totaling 99 yards as a senior and earned consensus All-

America recognition as well as being the Cornhuskers' first Butkus Award winner. He also was the Big Eight Defensive Player of the Year and an Academic All-American.

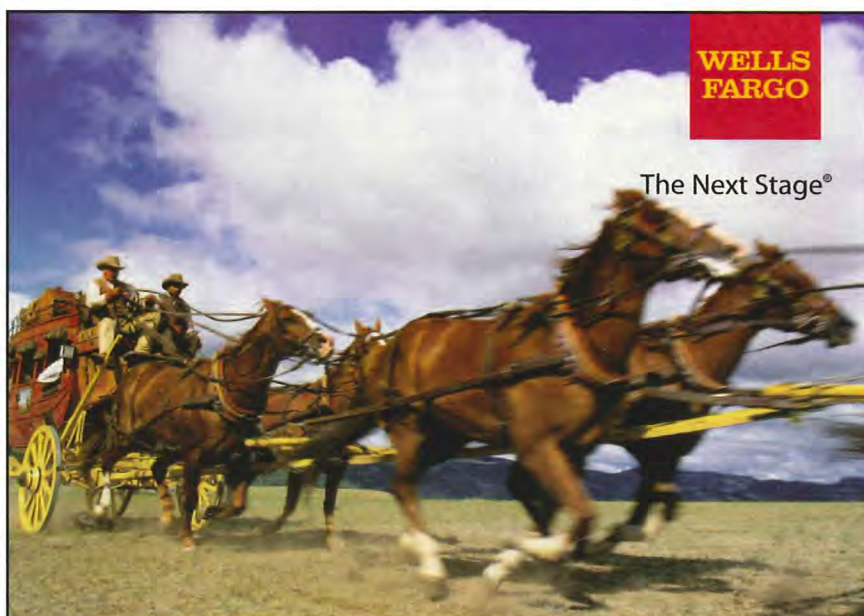
Shields won the Outland Trophy and was a consensus All-American at offensive guard in 1992, after becoming just the second true Cornhusker freshman offensive lineman to earn a letter since the NCAA reinstated freshman eligibility in 1972. John Reece also lettered as a true freshman.

Brown, who sat out the 1989 season because of Prop 48 restrictions, would earn first-team all-conference recognition twice before leaving for the NFL. He rushed for more than 1,000 yards twice, joining Calvin

Jones as the "We backs" in 1992, and still ranks No. 10 in career rushing.

Brown played five seasons in the NFL with the New Orleans Saints, and Shields, a third-round draft pick, is still playing for the Kansas City Chiefs on his way to the Pro Football Hall of Fame. Alberts, a first-round draft pick, spent only three seasons with the Indianapolis Colts because of injury.

He was well-prepared for life after football, however, as Osborne told him he needed to be. "I remember thinking (early on), you know what I do these four years in school is really going to determine how I live the rest of my life," Alberts would say after his NFL career ended prematurely. ■



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'Special Breed'

Phillips provides leadership for close group of tight ends

By Terry Douglass

J.B. Phillips likes to say that it takes a "special breed" to play tight end. Not necessarily an offensive lineman and not quite a full-blown receiver, tight ends are the football equivalent of men without a country.

"A lot of people don't understand us, and people joke around with us that we don't belong," said Phillips a junior tight end for the Cornhuskers. "We definitely do our own thing."

To that end, it seems Nebraska's tight ends are, well, tight.

"We'll give each other a hard time, but that's just how we are," Phillips said. "We're close like that. We can joke around, but we also take advice from each other, and we know when it's time to get serious."

"It's a fun group. We have a good time together."

It has been a great time for Nebraska's tight ends this season in terms of getting into the end zone. Through the Huskers' first 11 games, Phillips, Matt Herian, Josh Mueller and Hunter Teafatiller had combined for nine touchdown receptions.

"If you score, it's great, but at our position, you're almost more excited if one of your buddies does," said Phillips, who had 12 receptions for 75 yards and two TDs heading into the Colorado game. "That's just how we are. We're a very close group of players — I'd like to think

probably one of the closest groups on the team."

Nebraska tight ends coach Shawn Watson said he quickly noticed that the players at his position appeared to be a very close-knit group.

"Matt and J.B. lead the group, but J.B. is kind of the foundation or the cornerstone of that whole group,"

Watson said. "His leadership is really big. He's great at helping the younger players, and he's also great at helping the older players who are fighting through the learning curves."

While it may come as a surprise to some, Watson said tight end is one of the more difficult positions to play in Nebraska's West Coast offense.

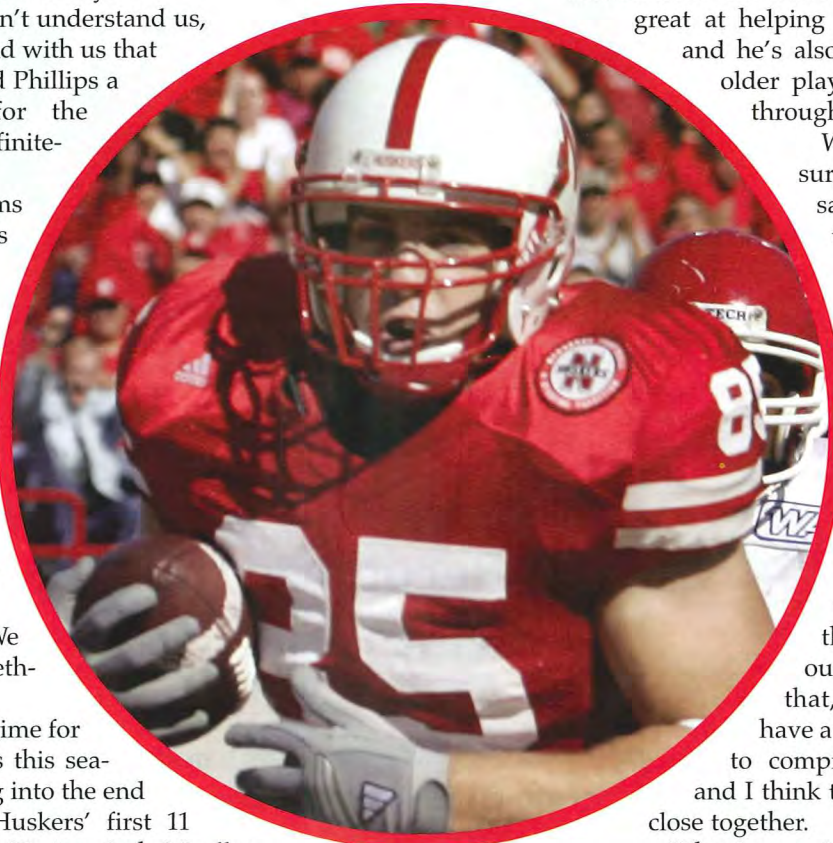
"They have a lot of responsibility heaped upon them each week," Watson said. "They have a lot of mental preparation every week in our game plan because they are the moving pieces in our offense. Because of that, every week, they have a lot of things they have to comprehend in our game, and I think that bonds them really close together."

"They're a unique group in that they really work so well together."

Watson said Phillips' understanding of the offense and the weekly alterations is essential for the Huskers.

"We couldn't do what we do offensively — with all the things we do with our motion-shift game — without him," Watson said. "He's the captain of all that for us. J.B. allows us a lot of flexibility in the offense."

#85 J.B. PHILLIPS
JUNIOR TIGHT END



Scott Bruhn

Phillips said one thing he loves about playing tight end is the diversity that's required.

"You can't find just a blocker anymore, and you can't find just a receiver at the tight end position anymore," Phillips said. "You have to be able to do both to really get out on the field here. I think that's what you see from us as a unit. I think everyone has become more dual threat at the position."

"I think you have to worry about us at the point of attack, but then you also have to worry about us slipping by you, too."

Interestingly, Phillips has played a significant role for Nebraska the past two seasons despite the fact that he never really set out to be a college football player. The 6-foot-3, 245-pound native of Colleyville, Texas, said he never considered the idea of playing football beyond high school until he began receiving recruiting interest from major colleges.

Phillips figured he'd probably just wind up at Texas A&M, where several of his buddies were planning to go.

"Then, the letters started coming, and I got a couple of offers, and then

I decided I might have to think about the whole football thing," Phillips said. "I really hadn't thought about playing college football a lot, which is probably different than a lot of the other guys that are here that had it set in stone since their freshman year of high school."

"For me, it wasn't my ultimate goal. It was just something that came up as an opportunity, and I decided that I wanted to take it."

Even now, Phillips said he sees such remarkable athletes in the Big 12 Conference that he sometimes wonders how he got on the same field with them. It seems that he uses his self-inflicted inferiority complex as motivation.

"I mean I definitely have athletic talent — I wouldn't be here if I didn't — but that's just kind of how I approach it," Phillips said. "That kind of gives me the drive to always work hard and things like that because I'm definitely not a 4.4 (40-yard dash) guy or anything of that nature. That's not me."

Instead, Phillips relies on his mind to get an edge. A six-time member of the Big 12 Commissioner's academic

honor roll, it seems Phillips has plenty of football acumen, too.

"I've got to rely on doing things right — techniques and things like that," said Phillips, who has a 3.744 GPA in marketing. "With the athletic talent that I have, by doing all the little things, I feel I can just let that overtake people."

"That's the approach I've taken with football: Just get the little things done correctly and just play hard after that."

Besides being a standout student, Phillips has also been a good representative of the Nebraska football program. He has volunteered with the Ventures in Partnership Program, made local hospital visits and is an active member of Fellowship of Christian Athletes.

"J.B. does on an excellent job one and off the field," Watson said. "He's a fine, fine young man and he epitomizes everything you want your son to grow up and be — he really does."

It seems Phillips is indeed a special breed. ■

Terry Douglass is the sports editor of the *Grand Island (Neb.) Independent*. He can be reached at terry.douglass@charter.net.



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10 QUESTIONS

with **MENELIK HOLT**

**6-4/215 Fr. Wide Receiver
San Diego, Calif.**

Menelik Holt has matured a lot since arriving at Nebraska, with dreams of making an immediate impact. Most significantly, he had to deal with the loss of his mom.

Mary Holt died the weekend of the Oklahoma State game. After the team returned from Stillwater, Menelik got a phone call from his grandmother. He went home for the funeral but was back for the Missouri game. "I'm the one who wanted to come back and help my team," he said.

And the team helped him get through a difficult time, as an extended family.

"Actually, I've had my best practices ever the last couple of weeks," Holt said following the Texas A&M game. "The coaches say it's just because I haven't been thinking; I was just playing, using my ability. Sometimes, I get caught up in thinking too much. And that's when you mess up."

Holt has contributed on special teams, not quite what he imagined but something he has accepted and takes seriously. "Anything's better than sitting on the sideline," he said.

"When you're on the field, you have the opportunity to change momentum, change how the game flies. I love being on the field no matter what, helping my team. I'll do whatever I can."

If a teammate came to visit you in San Diego, what would you want to show him?

"I'd want to show them real restaurants, different types of food. The burger places, we have In-N-Out, Jack in the Box, Carl's Jr., and real Mexican food. The border is just 15 minutes away, so you get a taste for real Hispanic food. I'd probably take them to In-N-Out first. They'd love it. Jack in the Box is good, too, late at night."

If your life were made into a movie, who would you pick to play the part of you?

"I'd pick Tyrese because he's a buffed guy, and all the girls like him."

If you could spend 30 minutes with a celebrity in athletics or otherwise, who would you pick and what would you ask?

"Hines Ward . . . I'd ask him, 'How do you get hit so many times and still get up? How did you become so versatile?' While he was at Georgia, in one year, he started at quarterback, running back and receiver. You've really got to know an offense, really know techniques and be on top of your game to do that and be outstanding at all positions. So I'd ask him how he did that, how he humbled himself, what it took for him to go to the NFL and just play whatever, get hit, keep getting up and making the plays he does."

If you could excel in a sport other than football at the collegiate level, what sport would it be?

"I would probably try high jump in track. I did it during high school, but we never really had a coach. We just kind of



went out and jumped around. So I'd like to see what it was like to actually have a coach, how high I could get. In high school, I was a varsity starter for like four years, won my league. My best was 6-3. We didn't even have practice. We just showed up at the meets in basketball shorts."

What is the best movie you've ever seen?

"I liked 'Remember the Titans,' 'Powder,' 'Men of Honor,' 'Blackhawk Down,' a lot of movies like that."

Terrell Owens, Chad Johnson or Marvin Harrison?

"I'd have to go with the great one, Marvin Harrison, not just because of him but because of his communication with Peyton Manning. If you watch tape on them, they know what each other is doing. They know where the ball is going to be, where they're going to throw it."

If you had a CD player and only three CDs to play on it, what would they be?

"It would have to be Anthony Hamilton, Tupac and probably Lauryn Hill. I like to listen to hardcore rap, but sometimes you give your mind a break and think about more positive stuff."

What college football team, other than Nebraska, has the best helmets?

"I'd say probably Michigan. I don't know what you call that style, but there was a high school near me with that helmet, and I always wished I wore it. I don't think it would go good with our jerseys, though."

What do you remember about your recruiting trip to Nebraska?

"Oh man, people knowing my name and asking for autographs before I was even here. That's probably the biggest thing I remember, the Tunnel Walk and everyone knowing who you are. I came for the Spring Game before my official visit, and I committed after that."

What's the best thing they serve at the training table?

"I think one thing every single kid here gets is the chicken breasts. I don't know why. Maybe it's because of James Harris, our nutritionist. Day in and day out it's the same chicken, same shape, same color, cooked the same way, same sauce, but I could eat it every time, that and the gourmet ice. It's a slushy type drink, strawberry and orange. Everyone gets the strawberry and mixes it with lemonade. When the catfish comes, everyone is in line to get that, too." ■



Nebraska 37

Colorado 14

Nebraska I-back
Brandon Jackson
leads the celebra-
tion after scoring
one of his two
touchdowns in the
second half. (Photo
by Scott Bruhn)

New Tricks

***'Receiver' Turner
'was just too open'
on gadget play***

***By Mike Babcock
Photos: Scott Bruhn***

You've seen halfback passes. You've seen reverses with wide receivers. And you've seen pooch punts by a place-kicker. Nebraska used all of those plays against Colorado.

But you might not have seen a couple of the special plays coach Bill Callahan called in the Cornhuskers' 37-14 victory, before a record crowd of 85,800 at Memorial Stadium.

The first produced a touchdown late in the second quarter. Nebraska faced fourth-and-7 at the Colorado 29-yard line, and Callahan sent in the field goal unit, sort of. Long-snapper Lane Kelly was on the field, as was holder Jake Wesch. But the alleged kicker was back-up quarterback Joe Ganz.

The team lined up to Kelly's left, except for defensive end Barry Turner, who was split wide to the right. Typically, teams shift from the swinging-gate, "muddle-huddle" into a regular alignment. In this case, Todd Peterson went in motion, left to right, and Kelly snapped the ball, directly to Ganz.

Ganz was supposed to pass the ball to Peterson, but the defensive back covering Turner dropped off on Peterson, leaving Turner open for the touchdown. "Barry brags to me all the time, saying, 'Look at my highlight tape in high school. I was a great tight end. I can catch,'" Ganz said. "I actually threw it to him two weeks ago (in practice), and he dropped it. So I told him I was never going to throw it to him again, no matter how open he was. He was just too open today, so I had to throw it to him."

When he ran onto the field for the play, "it was a little nerve-racking," said Ganz, who "kicked a little in high school, just because our field goal kicker was a soccer player, and he was kind of in and out. I wasn't too bad, but there was no way I wanted to kick that."



Nebraska defensive end Barry Turner (99) hauls in a 29-yard touchdown pass from Joe Ganz late in the second quarter.

WORTH ANOTHER LOOK

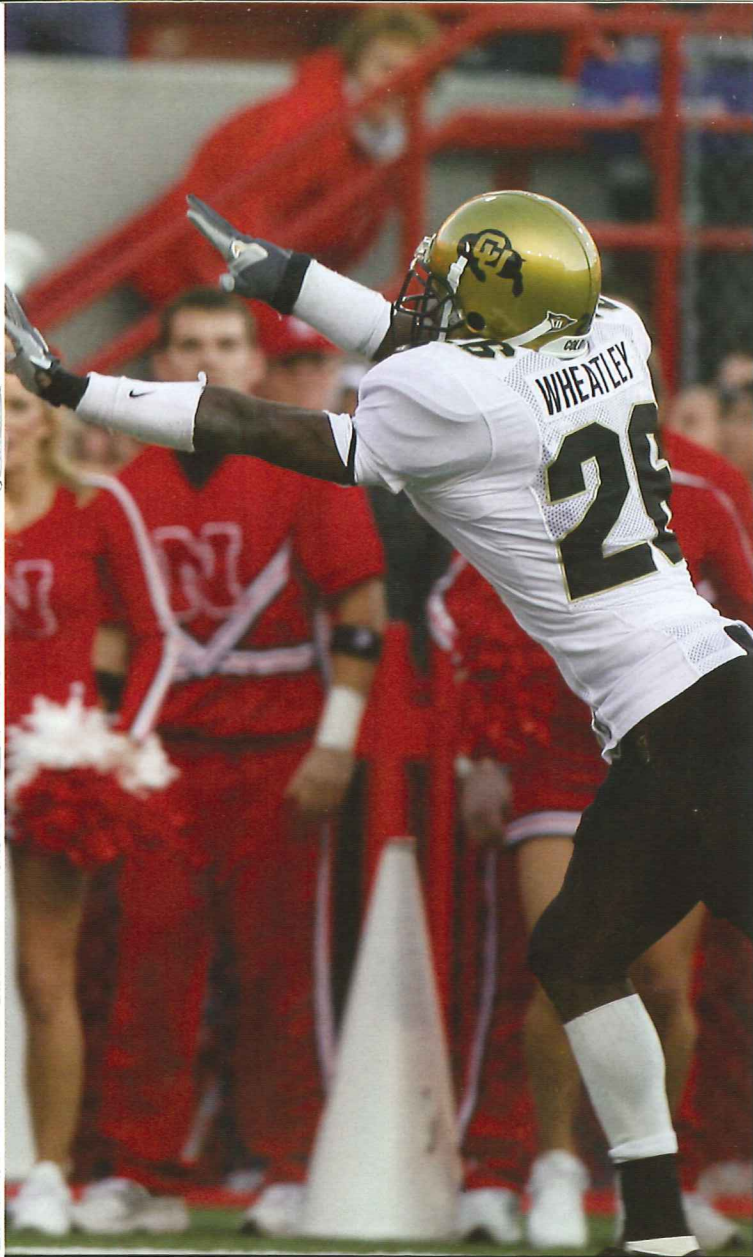
His job was to give the impression he was going to kick it, of course. "I tried to take three steps back and one over," he said. "I don't know how it looked. Obviously, I didn't look that good."

The befuddled Buffaloes "were pointing, trying to get guys all over. I thought for sure they'd call a timeout, but they didn't. So we snapped it. They actually had everything covered."

If Turner's defender "wouldn't have dropped down on Todd, I could have maybe tried to force it to Todd, but he wouldn't have been open . . . that guy sat, and Barry ran right by him," Ganz said.

Starting quarterback Zac Taylor also was called on to do some acting in the fourth quarter, on a fourth-and-1 play at the Colorado 40-yard line. The Cornhuskers lined up as if to punt, with Dan Titchener deep. Titchener shifted wide to the left, with Taylor moving behind center.

Then, Taylor began walking away from the line, angling left, toward the Nebraska sideline. As he moved, the ball was snapped to safety Tierre Green, who had shifted behind him.



Green ran to the right, picking up 7 yards and the first down.

"It's my favorite play because I'm out there and I really don't have to do anything; I just have to cause a scene," said Taylor. "I don't know how good of a job I did. Ganz was giving me junk for not being a good actor on that one. But it worked, so that's all that matters."

Nebraska would score four plays later, on Taylor's touchdown pass to Brandon Jackson.

"You've got to be alert, especially for plays like that — and after all the tricks we've shown teams," said middle linebacker Corey McKeon. "We've done a trick on everything we have."

Colorado linebacker Thaddaeus Washington was alert for the play, according to McKeon. But the Cornhuskers' Clayton Sievers made a key block on Washington.

With the block "we probably wouldn't have gotten the first (down), McKeon said.

The success of such plays is "all timing," said Callahan. "It's timing. It's field. It's instinct. It's where the ball's at, field position. The ball has to be at the right spot."

The special plays weren't necessarily intended to send a message.

"We're trying to win this game out there," Callahan said. ■

REPORT CARD

RUSHING OFFENSE

Colorado's run defense was third-best in the Big 12, statistically, underscoring Nebraska's success on the ground, despite the absence of Matt Slauson and Greg Austin in the line. The Huskers rushed 46 times for 190 yards, with I-back Brandon Jackson gaining 142 yards on a career-high 34 carries. "I feel good about Coach (Randy) Jordan and the coaching staff giving me the load," said Jackson. ★★★★★

PASSING OFFENSE

Taylor's final game at Memorial Stadium was typically efficient, 19-of-28 completions for 249 yards and two touchdowns without an interception. Oh yes, and Joe Ganz threw his third touchdown pass (out of seven completions this season) on one of the "special plays." Jackson led the team in receptions. ★★★★★

RUSHING DEFENSE

Nebraska allowed 166 yards on the ground, 89 of them coming on two big plays. The tackling left much to be desired. "I don't know what it is, but we need to get guys going on the tackling," said middle linebacker Corey McKeon. "I'm no angel myself. I miss a few out there. But we've got to gang-tackle so if someone misses, we have other guys there to help." ★★★★★

PASSING DEFENSE

The Buffaloes ranked 117th nationally in passing and did little to affect that. Quarterback Bernard Jackson completed 11-of-23 and was sacked four times. However, he did put Colorado on the scoreboard with a 14-yard touchdown pass to Riar Geer late in the first quarter. ★★★★★

SPECIAL TEAMS

Three of the Cornhuskers' seven "special plays" came on special teams. Two of the three produced points and the third kept a touchdown drive alive. "There were contributions across the board that we're certainly proud of, especially our special teams, the way they stepped up," coach Bill Callahan said. ★★★★★

NUMBERS

7

Trick plays? Gadget plays? Quarterback Zac Taylor called them "special plays." Whatever the term, the Cornhuskers used seven of them. The message? "Be ready for anything, I guess," he said. "I didn't know we were going to run that many. I don't think anybody knew."

NEBRASKA-COLORADO NOTES

SENIOR DAY

Nineteen Cornhuskers suited up for the final time at Memorial Stadium. Jordan Adams was added to the original list of 18. The pre-game introductions were cut short, however.

The seniors: Adams, Greg Austin, Stewart Bradley, Adam Carriker, Barry Cryer, Ola Dagunduro, Isaiah Fluellen, Matt Herian, Andy Kadavy, Lane Kelly, Newt Lingenfelter, Kurt Mann, Jay Moore, Mark O'Shea, Will Otto, Brandon Rigoni, Andrew Shanle, Zac Taylor, Dane Todd.

Nebraska's first play from scrimmage was an isolation play in honor of Todd. "We figured he blocked enough isolations (as a fullback), we wanted to give him one more," coach Bill Callahan said.

"But all those guys, we're just proud of them. They all contributed to this football team's success in a lot of different ways."

MEDIA ADVICE

I-back Brandon Jackson's touchdown from 2 yards out produced Nebraska's first third-quarter points since the Kansas State game, a topic of much discussion. "We've been listening to reporters, and they've been telling us to score in the third quarter, so we went out there and we did," Taylor said.

MAJOR EFFECT

Callahan praised his special teams' play. The trick plays drew most of the attention, of course, but freshman safety Major Culbert contributed in a more traditional, partially deflecting a Colorado punt to set up the Cornhuskers' first touchdown drive late in the first quarter.

The blocked kick was Nebraska's fourth of the season. The Cornhuskers blocked a field goal attempt against Texas A&M and extra-point kicks against Texas and Oklahoma State.

TRICKS CLICK

The touchdown pass from Joe Ganz to Barry Turner was the fourth time Nebraska has scored on a trick play this season, and the third consecutive game at home in which the Cornhuskers did it. The others were passes from Jake Wesch to Hunter Teafatiller (fake field goal, Kansas State), Marlon Lucky to Nate Swift (halfback, Texas) and Maurice Purify to Terrence Nunn (reverse, Missouri).

The halfback pass by Lucky was called three times against Colorado. Lucky kept the ball and didn't throw on one. He overthrew tight end Matt Herian on another. And his throwback pass to Taylor resulted in a pass interference that was nullified by a holding penalty against Nebraska. Because of Lucky's lack of success, "you can throw him out of contention for playing quarterback next year," said Taylor.

Taylor wouldn't have caught the pass even without the interference, according to teammate Corey McKeon. "You know Zac made up that play, drew it in the dirt," McKeon said.

"The fact that Zac actually thinks in his own mind that he could have caught that ball with Thaddeus Washington right there . . . he's not going to hear the end of it from me." Actually, the defender was end Abraham Wright.

ANOTHER RECORD

Taylor's two touchdown passes increased his school single-season record to 24 and tied the school career record of 43, which he now shares with Tommie Frazier (1992-95). Should the senior from Norman, Okla., be the All-Big 12 first-team quarterback? "I think so, but I'm biased," said Callahan.

"I can't vote for our own players, but I think he is, and we'll see how the vote comes out. I think coaches across the league respect his play and the type of competitor he is."

With 249 yards, Taylor also broke his own school single-season passing yardage record. He'll go to the Big 12 championship game with 2,789 passing yards. His previous record was 2,653 yards.

NEXT LEVEL

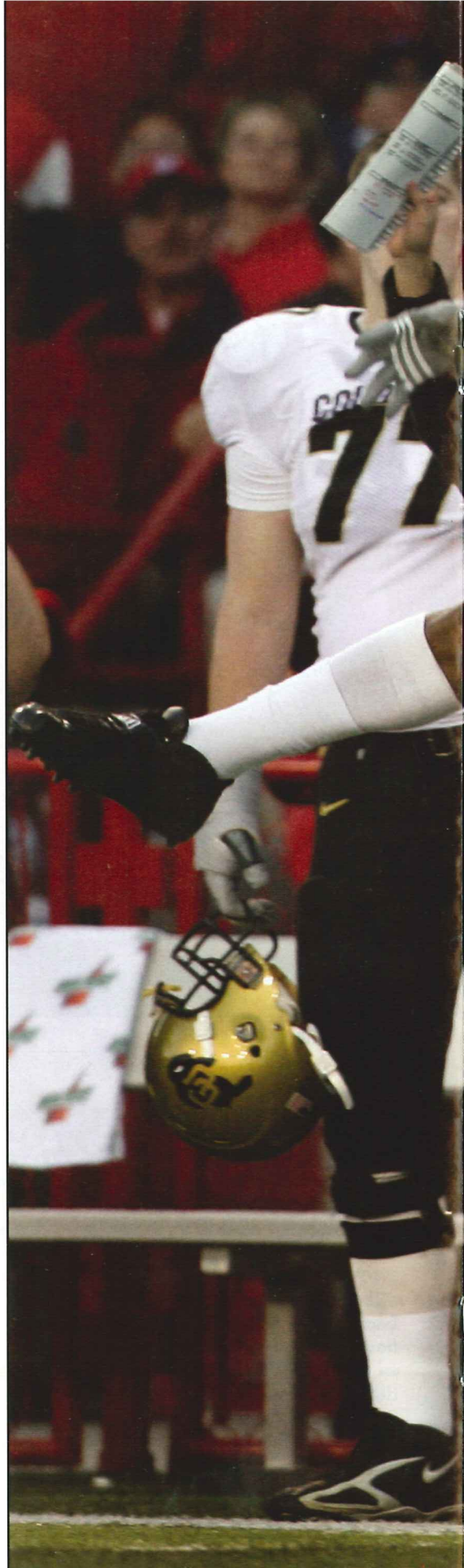
Carriker, another of the Cornhuskers deserving first-team all-conference recognition according to Callahan, won't be finished playing after the bowl game. "He's got a bright future ahead of him," said Callahan. "He's going to do some great things in his professional career."

"Today he was just brilliant, made a lot of great plays, dominated the match-up. We had him over the guard, over the tackle, we moved him quite a bit and he just made play after play. It was just great to see him go out on a real positive note, on a successful note (such) as that."

NUNN BETTER

Junior wide receiver Terrence Nunn caught four passes for 52 yards, including a 15-yarder for a touchdown in the first quarter. With the four receptions, he moved past Matt Davison into second place on the Cornhuskers' career-receptions list. Nunn has 96. Davison had 93.

Johnny Rodgers, the 1972 Heisman Trophy winner, is first on the list with 143. ■



Nebraska wide receiver Maurice Purify (16) grabs a third-down pass from Colorado's Thaddeus Washington (10), who was called for interference on the play.



quarter pass from Zac Taylor, despite the efforts of Colorado cornerback Terry play. NU declined the penalty, and the play was good for 31 yards.

Who STOOD OUT?

OFFENSE

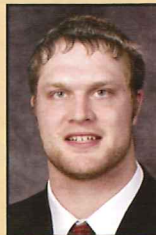
Brandon Jackson rushed for 142 yards, caught six passes for 42 yards and scored two touchdowns, one rushing and one receiving. The junior from Horn Lake, Miss., is worthy of All-Big 12 recognition, according to Callahan. "His overall play as a pass receiver, as a runner, as a blocker, I've said it many times, he's a complete back," said Callahan. "And he surely demonstrated that today."



Brandon Jackson

DEFENSE

Adam Carriker "dominated the football game," Callahan said. "He's another all-conference player, in my opinion." The senior defensive end was credited with seven tackles, including three for losses and two sacks for 18 yards in losses. He tackled the Buffaloes' Mell Holliday in the end zone for a safety early in the fourth quarter. "Every game there are some plays I'd like to have back," said Carriker. "But for the most part, I thought I played pretty well."



Adam Carriker

SPECIAL TEAMS



Barry Turner

Defensive end Barry Turner came up big on special teams, catching the touchdown pass from Ganz and then setting up the safety by getting to Jordan Congdon's "pooch punt" before the ball could cross the goal line. Turner leaped into the end zone, tossing the ball back to tight end Josh Mueller at the Colorado 1-yard line. "Barry Turner's a great ath-

INJURY REPORT

Offensive linemen Matt Slauson (ankle) and Greg Austin (knee) were held out because of injuries, as was I-back Cody Glenn (foot), while I-back Marlon Lucky played but was slowed by a back problem. All should be able to play in the Big 12 championship game. Taylor missed the final 23 seconds of the first half, after a late hit. "He got his bell rung. It was a cheapshot," said back-up Joe Ganz. "The kid hit him late, helmet to helmet. But Zac's one of the toughest kids I've ever met. He wanted to come back in, but I don't think Coach Callahan wanted to risk anything with 23 seconds left." Taylor was back after halftime.

GAME STATS

SCORING

Nov. 24, 2006

Memorial Stadium Lincoln, Neb.
Attendance 85,800

	1	2	3	4	F
Colorado	7	0	7	0	14
Nebraska	7	7	7	16	37

First Quarter

	CU	NU
NU Nunn Pass from Taylor 15-yards (Congdon Kick) 05:08 Drive: 10 plays 58 yds 6:24	0	7

	CU	NU
CU Geer Pass from Jackson 14-yards (Crosby Kick) 01:31 Drive: 6 plays 75 yds 3:26	7	7

Second Quarter

	CU	NU
NU Turner Pass from Ganz 29-yards (Congdon Kick) 04:14 Drive: 7 plays 63 yds 2:18	7	14

Third Quarter

	CU	NU
CU Holliday 45-yard Run (Crosby Kick) 11:51 Drive: 4 plays 71 yds 1:34	14	14

	CU	NU
NU Jackson 2-yard Run (Congdon Kick) 04:49 Drive: 8 plays 65 yds 3:09	14	21

Fourth Quarter

	CU	NU
NU Team Safety 14:22	14	23

	CU	NU
NU Jackson Pass from Taylor 18-yards (Congdon Kick) 10:16 Drive: 10 plays 59 yds 3:56	14	30

	CU	NU
NU Wilson 7-yard Run (Congdon Kick) 00:23 Drive: 9 plays 60 yds 4:14	14	37

TEAM STATS

	CU	NU
Total First Downs	14	24
Rushing	5	11
Passing	9	11
Penalty	0	2
Rushing Attempts	31	46
Yards Gained Rushing	207	205
Yards Lost Rushing	41	15
Net Yards Rushing	166	190
Net Yards Passing	131	278
Passes Attempted	23	30
Passes Completed	11	20
Had Intercepted	0	0
Percent Completion	47.8%	66.7%
Yards per Attempt	5.7	9.3
Yards per Completion	11.9	13.9
Total Offensive Plays	54	76
Total Net Yards	297	468
Avg. Gain Per Play	5.5	6.2
Fumbles: No-Lost	1-0	2-2
Penalties: No-Yards	8-74	10-70
Punts: No-Yards	6-251	4-156
Avg. Per Punt	41.8	39.0
Avg. Net Punt	41.8	38.5
Punt Returns: No-Yards	2-2	1-0
Kickoff Returns: No-Yards	5-89	3-35
Interception Returns: No-Yards	0-0	0-0
Fumble Returns: No-Yards	1-10	0-0
Miscellaneous Yards	0	0
Possession Time	24:11	35:49
Third-Down Conversions	5-13	8-15
Percentage	38.5%	53.3%
Fourth-Down Conversions	0-1	3-3
Percentage	0.0%	100.0%
Sacks By: No-Yards	1-8	4-40



Nebraska defensive end Adam Carriker sacks Colorado quarterback Bernard Jackson. Carriker had two sacks, and he and linebacker Corey McKeon combined on a safety.

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

COLORADO

	No	Gain	Lost	Net	Avg	TD	Lg
Holliday	8	68	1	67	8.4	1	45
Charles	5	61	0	61	12.2	0	44
Ellis	6	22	0	22	3.7	0	9
Jackson	12	56	40	16	1.3	0	13
Total	31	207	41	166	5.4	1	45

	Att	Comp	%	Int	Yds	TD	Lg
Jackson	23	11	47.8	0	131	1	31
Total	32	19	59.4	0	288	0	47

	No	Yds	TD	Lg
Crawford	5	79	0	31
Holz	1	15	0	15
Geer	1	14	1	14
Williams	2	13	0	9
Barnett	2	10	0	6
Total	11	131	1	31

	No	Yds	TD	Lg
McBride	2	2	0	2
Total	2	2	0	2

	No	Yds	TD	Lg
Washington	3	55	0	25
Charles	2	34	0	18
Total	5	89	0	25

	No	Avg	Lg	Blk	TB	FC	50+	In	20
DiLallo	5	45.0	59	0	0	1	1	1	1
Team	1	26.0	26	1	0	0	0	0	0
Total	6	41.8	59	1	0	1	1	1	1

	Made	Att	Lg	Blkd
Crosby	0	1	0	0
Total	0	1	0	0

	Solo	Ast	Tot	TFL	Sack	PD	FF	FR
Dizon	8	9	17	1.5-2	0-0	0	0	0
Harris	7	3	10	0-0	0-0	0	2	1
Th Washington	6	2	8	1-1	0-0	0	0	1
Te Washington	3	4	7	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Wheatley	5	2	7	1-1	0-0	1	0	0
Boye-Doe	2	4	6	0.5-0	0-0	0	0	0
Nicolas	4	2	6	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Jones	2	3	5	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Sipili	3	2	5	0-0	0-0	1	0	0

NEBRASKA

	No	Gain	Lost	Net	Avg	TD	Lg
Jackson	34	149	7	142	4.2	1	31
Lucky	4	21	0	21	5.2	0	9
Wilson	3	16	0	16	5.3	1	7
Taylor	2	11	0	11	5.5	0	10
Green	1	7	0	7	7.0	0	7

	1	1	0	1	1.0	0	1
Purify	1	0	8	-8	-8.0	0	0
Total	46	205	15	190	4.1	2	31

	Att	Comp	%	Int	Yds	TD	Lg
Taylor	28	19	67.9	0	249	2	57
Ganz	1	1	100.0	0	29	1	29
Lucky	1	0	0.0	0	0	0	0
Total	30	20	66.7	0	278	3	57

	No	Yds	TD	Lg
Erickson	1	57	0	57
Nunn	4	52	1	19
Purify	3	51	0	31
Jackson	6	42	1	18
Turner	1	29	1	29
Swift	2	23	0	14
Hardy	1	18	0	18
Mueller	1	5	0	5
Teafatiller	1	1	0	1
Total	20	278	3	57

	No	Yds	TD	Lg
Grixby	1	0	0	0
Total	1	0	0	0

	No	Yds	TD	Lg
Phillips	1	15	0	15
Lucky	1	14	0	14
Jackson	1	6	0	6
Total	3	35	0	15

	No	Avg	Lg	Blk	TB	FC	50+	In	20
Titchener	3	40.3	43	0	0	1	0	0	0
Congdon	1	35.0	35	0	0	0	0	0	1
Total	4	39.0	43	0	0	1	0	0	1

	Made	Att	Lg	Blkd
Total	0	0	0	0

	Solo	Ast	Tot	TFL	Sack	PD	FF	FR
Jones	5	4	9	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Carriker	3	4	7	2.5-19	2-18	0	0	0
McKeon	4	2	6	1.5-15	1-15	0	0	0
Octavien	2	3	5	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Steinkuhler	3	1	4	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Thenarse	3	1	4	0-0	0-0	0	1	0
Bradley	1	2	3	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Green	0	3	3	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Cryer	2	0	2	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Dagunduro	1	1	2	1-7	1-7	0	0	0
Grixby	1	1	2	0-0	0-0	1	0	0
Kadavy	1	1	2	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Brandenburgh	0	1	1	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Culbert	0	1	1	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Erickson	0	1	1	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Moore	0	1	1	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
O'Hanlon	1	0	1	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Purify	1	0	1	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Ruud	0	1	1	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Shanle	1	0	1	0-0	0-0	1	0	0
Young	1	0	1	0-0	0-0	0	0	0

2006 SEASON STATS

RUSHING

	G	No	Gain	Lost	Net	Avg	TD	Lg	Yd/G
Jackson, Brandon	12	168	913	32	881	5.2	7	48	73.4
Lucky, Marlon	12	116	666	26	640	5.5	6	51	53.3
Glenn, Cody	9	71	375	5	370	5.2	8	36	41.1
Wilson, Kenny	11	74	354	17	337	4.6	4	30	30.6
Nunn, Terrence	12	3	21	0	21	7.0	0	18	1.8
Hardy, Frantz	12	3	16	2	14	4.7	0	13	1.2
Green, Tierre	12	1	7	0	7	7.0	0	7	0.6
Purify, Maurice	12	1	1	0	1	1.0	0	1	0.1
Ganz, Joe	4	3	10	20	-10	-3.3	0	10	-2.5
Taylor, Zac	12	49	121	164	-43	-0.9	1	24	-3.6

PASSING

	G	Att	Comp	%	Int	Yds	TD	Lg	Yd/G
Taylor, Zac	12	315	196	62.2	4	2789	24	78	232.4
Ganz, Joe	4	13	7	53.8	0	122	3	31	30.5
Purify, Maurice	12	1	1	100.0	0	28	1	28	2.3
Titchener, Dan	12	1	1	100.0	0	28	0	28	2.3
Lucky, Marlon	12	2	1	50.0	0	25	1	25	2.1
Wesch, Jake	9	1	1	100.0	0	17	1	17	1.9

RECEIVING

	G	No	Yds	Avg	TD	Lg	Yd/G
Purify, Maurice	12	30	584	19.5	7	63	48.7
Nunn, Terrence	12	37	552	14.9	3	75	46.0
Hardy, Frantz	12	14	317	22.6	3	78	26.4
Swift, Nate	12	18	312	17.3	1	49	26.0
Jackson, Brandon	12	26	291	11.2	2	49	24.2
Lucky, Marlon	12	24	272	11.3	0	42	22.7
Peterson, Todd	12	17	235	13.8	2	31	19.6
Herian, Matt	12	12	150	12.5	2	36	12.5
Erickson, Dan	12	3	80	26.7	0	57	6.7
Phillips, J.B.	12	12	75	6.2	2	10	6.2
Teafatiller, Hunter	12	4	64	16.0	3	29	5.3
Turner, Barry	12	1	29	29.0	1	29	2.4
Mueller, Josh	12	5	26	5.2	2	8	2.2
Senske, Matt	4	2	13	6.5	1	12	3.2
Todd, Dane	12	2	9	4.5	1	8	0.8

PUNT RETURNS LEADERS

	G	No	Yds	Avg	TD	Lg	Yd/G
Nunn, Terrence	12	18	153	8.5	0	31	12.8
Grixby, Courtney	12	9	66	7.3	0	16	5.5
Swift, Nate	12	3	50	16.7	0	33	4.2

KICKOFF RETURNS LEADERS

	G	No	Yds	Avg	TD	Lg	Yd/G
Jackson, Brandon	12	7	121	17.3	0	24	10.1
Lucky, Marlon	12	6	113	18.8	0	32	9.4
Green, Tierre	12	3	59	19.7	0	23	4.9
Hardy, Frantz	12	3	49	16.3	0	22	4.1
Wilson, Kenny	11	2	42	21.0	0	27	3.8

PUNTING

	G	No	Avg	Lg	Blk	TB	FC	50+	In	20
Titchener, Dan	12	54	39.7	58	0	2	23	5	18	
Congdon, Jordan	12	1	35.0	35	0	0	0	0	1	

FIELD GOALS

	G	Att	Made	Lg	Blkd
Congdon, Jordan	11	7	5	40	0

DEFENSE LEADERS

	G	Tack	Asst	Tot	TFL	Sack	PD	FF	FR
Bradley, Stewart	12	35	32	67	2-12	0-0	1	2	3
Jones, Andre	12	41	21	62	0-1	0-0	7	0	0
Green, Tierre	12	34	27	61	0-1	0-0	2	0	1
Ruud, Bo	12	32	28	60	4-31	2-23	2	3	1
McKeon, Corey	11	26	29	55	3-24	1-15	2	1	1
Shanle, Andrew	12	36	14	50	0-0	0-0	4	0	1
Carriker, Adam	12	21	27	48	11-52	6-36	3	0	0
Grixby, Courtney	12	32	11	43	1-3	0-0	10	1	1
Brandenburg, L	12	17	21	38	2-7	0-1	0	1	0
Moore, Jay	12	17	19	36	9-56	4-33	3	0	0

TEAM STATISTICS

	NU	OPP
Total First Downs	251	211
Rushing	113	75
Passing	125	127
Penalty	13	9
Total Net Yards	5208	4161
Total Plays	829	763
Yards Per Play	6.3	5.5
Yards Per Game	434.0	346.8
Rushing Attempts-Yards	495-2199	373-1523
Yards Per Attempt	4.4	4.1
Yards Per Game	183.2	126.9
Pass Att.-Comp.-Int.	334-207-4	390-209-11
Passing Yards	3009	2638
Yards Per Completion	14.5	12.6
Yards Per Game	250.8	219.8
Punting: No.-Avg.	55-39.6	68-40.4
Fumbles-Lost	21-14	28-11
Penalties-Yards	65-545	68-513
Sacks By-Yds. Lost	25-200	25-184
Third-Down Conversions	82-170	55-165
Conversion Pct.	48.2	33.3
Fourth-Down Conversions	13-18	9-22
Conversion Pct.	72.2	40.9
Avg. Time Of Possession	33:01	26:59

Scoring

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	OT	TOT
Nebraska	110	121	49	120	7	407
Opponents	24	76	36	82	0	218

2006 RESULTS, SCHEDULE

1	Sept. 2	Louisiana Tech (3-9), W 49-10	1-0
2	Sept. 9	Nicholls State (4-7), W 56-7	2-0
3	Sept. 16	@USC (10-1), L 28-10	2-1
4	Sept. 23	Troy (6-5), W 56-0	3-1
5	Sept. 30	Kansas (6-6), W 39-32 (OT)	4-1
6	Oct. 7	@Iowa State (4-8), W 28-14	5-1
7	Oct. 14	@Kansas State (7-5), W 21-3	6-1
8	Oct. 21	Texas (9-3), L 22-20	6-2
9	Oct. 28	@Oklahoma State (6-6), L 41-29	6-3
10	Nov. 4	Missouri (8-4), W 34-20	7-3
11	Nov. 11	@Texas A&M (9-3), W 28-27	8-3
12	Nov. 24	Colorado (2-10), W 37-14	9-3
13	Dec. 2	vs. Oklahoma (10-2), 7 p.m., ABC Big 12 Championship @ Kansas City, Mo.	

SCOUTING REPORT

GAME 13

Oklahoma Dec. 2

Location: Norman, Okla.

Enrollment: 31,400

2006 record: 10-2

Coach: Bob Stoops, eighth year

Series: Oklahoma leads 42-37-3

7 p.m. (CST), ABC

Arrowhead Stadium, Kansas City

Quick Facts

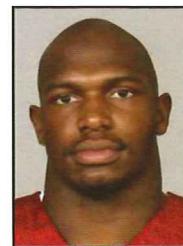
OU's 27-21 victory over Oklahoma State was its seventh straight and sixth without standout running back Adrian Peterson, who has been sidelined with a broken collarbone. He may return for the championship game.

Junior Allen Patrick, who had missed two games with an ankle injury, started against OSU and finished with 163 yards, second best of his career.

This is OU's 29th season with 10-plus wins. The Sooners are now No. 1 in the category, passing Alabama (28).

Sooner to Watch

Senior linebacker Rufus Alexander is



Oklahoma's leading tackler for a second straight season. He is trying to become the first player to lead the Sooners in tackles in consecutive seasons since Rocky Calmus did it in three straight years (1999-2001). Alexander also leads OU in tackles for loss (10.5) and has two sacks and one interception.

BIG 12 AT A GLANCE

	North Conf.		All		Saturday, Nov. 18
	W	L	W	L	
Nebraska	6	2	9	3	Iowa State 21, Missouri 16
Missouri	4	4	8	4	Kansas 39, Kansas State 20
Kansas State	4	4	7	5	Oklahoma 36, Baylor 10
Kansas	3	5	6	6	Texas Tech 30, Oklahoma State 24
Colorado	2	6	2	10	
Iowa State	1	7	4	8	
	South				Friday, Nov. 24
	W	L			
Oklahoma	7	1	10	2	Nebraska 37, Colorado 14
Texas	6	2	9	3	Texas A&M 12, Texas 7
Texas A&M	5	3	9	3	
Texas Tech	4	4	7	5	
Oklahoma State	3	5	6	6	
Baylor	3	5	4	8	
					Saturday, Nov. 25
Oklahoma					Oklahoma 27, Oklahoma State 21
Texas					Missouri 42, Kansas 17
					Saturday, Dec. 2
					Big 12 Championship, Kansas City, Mo.
Nebraska					Nebraska (9-3) vs. Oklahoma (10-2)

TENTATIVE 2-DEEPS

NEBRASKA OFFENSE

WRX	87	Nate Swift*	6-2	195	So.
	7	Frantz Hardy*	6-1	180	Jr.
LT	54	Chris Patrick*	6-4	290	Jr.
	76	Lydon Murtha*	6-7	315	So.
LG	62	Andy Christensen	6-3	300	So.
	67	Jacob Hickman	6-4	280	Fr.
C	59	Brett Byford	6-3	300	Jr.
	50	Kurt Mann**	6-4	290	Sr.
RG	61	Mike Huff*	6-4	305	So.
	67	Jacob Hickman	6-4	280	Fr.
RT	70	Matt Slauson*	6-5	335	So.
	77	Carl Nicks	6-5	325	Jr.
TE	11	Matt Herian***	6-5	245	Sr.
	81	Josh Mueller**	6-5	265	Jr.
WRZ	83	Terrence Nunn**	6-0	185	Jr.
	17	Todd Peterson*	6-4	210	So.
QB	13	Zac Taylor*	6-2	210	Sr.
	8	Joe Ganz	6-1	200	So.
FB	41	Dane Todd***	5-11	235	Sr.
	42	Matt Senske	6-3	235	Jr.
IB	32	Brandon Jackson**	5-11	210	Jr.
	20	Marlon Lucky*	6-0	210	So.
PK	29	Jordan Congdon*	5-11	175	So.

NEBRASKA DEFENSE

DE	44	Jay Moore*	6-4	280	Sr.
	99	Barry Turner*	6-3	250	So.
NT	54	Ola Dagunduro*	6-2	300	Sr.
	93	Ndamukong Suh	6-4	315	So.
DT	94	Barry Cryer*	6-2	280	Sr.
	43	Ty Steinkuhler*	6-3	280	So.
DE	90	Adam Carriker***	6-6	295	Sr.
	98	Zach Potter*	6-7	280	So.
SLB	34	Stewart Bradley***	6-4	245	Sr.
	88	Clayton Sievers*	6-4	240	So.
MLB	13	Corey McKeon*	6-1	225	Jr.
	40	Lance Brandenburg**	6-1	230	Jr.
WLB	51	Bo Ruud**	6-3	235	Jr.
	15	Steve Octavien	6-0	235	Jr.
SCB	25	Andre Jones	6-0	195	Jr.
	4	Rickey Thenarse	6-0	185	Fr.
SS	30	Tierre Green**	6-1	200	Jr.
	6	Major Culbert	6-0	200	Fr.
FS	8	Andrew Shanle***	6-1	210	Sr.
	9	Bryan Wilson	6-1	200	Jr.
WCB	2	Cortney Grixby**	5-9	170	Jr.
	23	Corey Young	6-0	195	Fr.
P	97	Dan Titchener	6-0	200	So.

OKLAHOMA OFFENSE

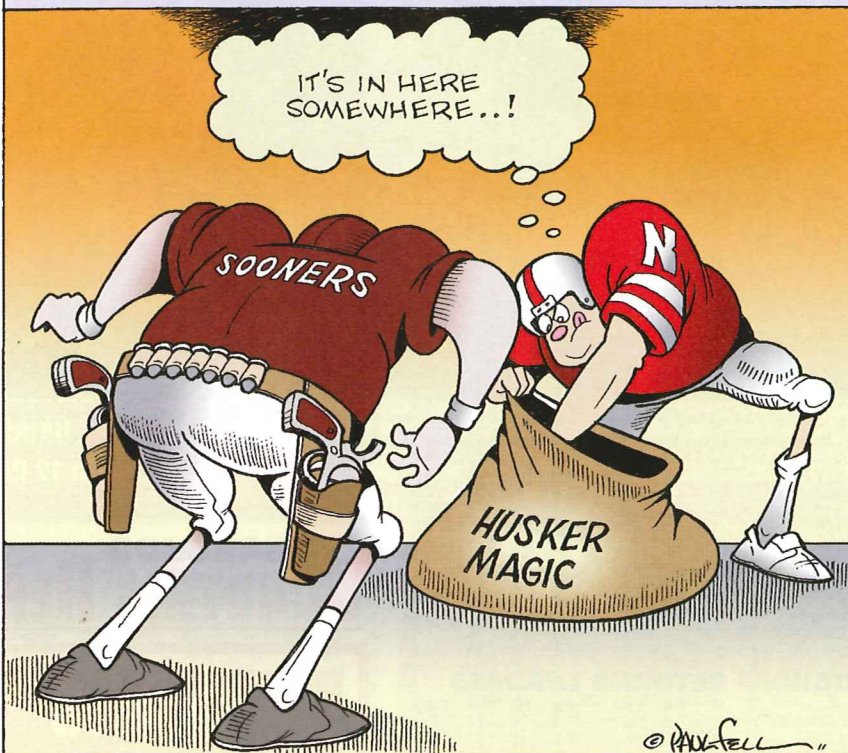
WR	4	Malcolm Kelly*	6-4	217	So.
	81	Fred Strong	6-1	197	So.
LT	79	Chris Messner***	6-6	280	Sr.
	60	Curtis Bailey	6-6	317	Fr.
LG	72	George Robinson*	6-5	330	So.
	77	Sherrone Moore	6-3	297	Jr.
C	50	Jon Cooper*	6-2	285	So.
	75	Chase Beeler	6-3	276	Fr.
RG	73	Brandon Walker	6-3	306	So.
	74	Brian Simmons	6-4	293	RFr.
RT	71	Trent Williams	6-5	321	Fr.
	63	Noah Hughey	6-3	268	Fr.
TE	18	Joe Jon Finley**	6-6	260	Jr.
	19	Jermaine Gresham	6-7	250	Fr.
WR	9	Juaquin Iglesias*	6-1	201	So.
	1	Manuel Johnson*	5-11	177	So.
QB	12	Paul Thompson***	6-4	214	Sr.
	15	Joey Halzle	6-3	198	So.
RB	23	Allen Patrick	6-0	200	Jr.
	29	Chris Brown	5-10	190	Fr.
FB	83	Brody Eldridge	6-5	248	RFr.
	45	Dane Zaslaw	6-1	237	Jr.
K	10	Garrett Hartley**	5-9	198	Jr.

OKLAHOMA DEFENSE

DE	92	Larry Birdine***	6-3	258	Sr.
	99	C.J. Ah You*	6-4	275	Sr.
DT	90	Steven Coleman**	6-4	299	Jr.
	68	Carl Pendleton**	6-5	269	Jr.
DT	97	Cory Bennett*	6-2	278	So.
	96	DeMarcus Granger	6-3	300	RFr.
DE	58	Calvin Thibodeaux***	6-1	248	Sr.
	91	Alonzo Dotson	6-3	252	Jr.
SLB	40	Curtis Lofton*	6-0	235	So.
	51	Demarrio Plasant**	6-2	231	Jr.
MLB	46	Zach Latimer***	6-1	234	Sr.
	40	Curtis Lofton*	6-0	235	So.
WLB	42	Rufus Alexander**	6-1	230	Sr.
	16	Lewis Baker**	6-2	210	Jr.
CB	24	Marcus Walker	5-10	197	Jr.
	11	Lendy Holmes*	6-1	196	So.
SS	3	Reggie Smith*	6-1	197	So.
	6	Jason Carter	5-10	199	Sr.
FS	41	Darien Williams**	6-0	197	Jr.
	20	Quinton Carter	6-1	190	Fr.
CB	11	Lendy Holmes*	6-1	196	So.
	25	D.J. Wolfe**	6-0	196	Jr.
P	31	Michael Cohen	6-0	205	Jr.

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Dec. 2



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(Guest)

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"Living proof – walking works."

Migraine headaches caused Karen to see a neurologist, who recommended that she take a daily prescription drug.

"I didn't want to be on medication, and that's when the doctor said to start walking 20 to 30 minutes a day. So I started walking, and I haven't had a headache since."

At first, it was an effort to fit walking into her schedule, so Karen added it to her list of things to do.

"I started out slow, but now I can hardly stop. I will walk to the bank or the post office. That way, I'm getting my errands and my walking done all at the same time."

Walking took away Karen's headaches and gave her a healthier outlook on life.

"I've lost weight, my cholesterol lowered eight points, my blood pressure is fine and I have more energy. I can accomplish a lot more because I feel better."

Karen thinks Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska is on the right track with its "Walking Works" program.

"Walking is fun — and it's a lot cheaper than taking a prescription every day.

"I think the **Blues** are good for you."

*"I enjoy my walks in
the beautiful Nebraska
countryside."*

— Karen,
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of Nebraska member



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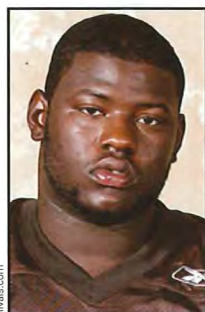


Heading Down the Stretch

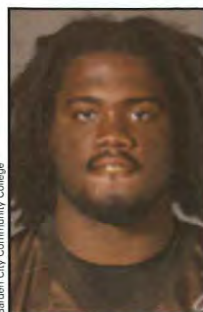
Several line prospects scheduled to visit NU

By Rick Shaw

The Nebraska football coaching staff hoped that a big visit weekend over the Thanksgiving holiday would go a long way toward helping put the finishing touches on their 2007 recruiting class. At least 15 official visitors were expected to visit Lincoln for the Huskers' battle against Colorado.



Shukree Barfield



Kevin Dixon

The Huskers, who are expected to sign as many as 25 athletes to letters of intent in February, claimed 17 oral commitments heading into the final week of November. Of those pledges, nine players are slated to line up on the defensive side of the ball in Lincoln while seven are expected to line up on offense. In addition, Adi Kunalic, a kicker out of Fort Worth (North Crowley), Texas), has commu-

nicated his intentions of being part of this class.

Despite some quality early commitments, the Huskers have some needs that they still hope to fill during the final two months of recruiting. Gaining pledges from linemen on both sides of the line of scrimmage will be a priority for the Nebraska coaches.

At least four defensive linemen were to make the trek to Lincoln over Thanksgiving weekend. Chris Perry, a 6-foot-3, 319-pounds defensive tackle from Keller (Fossil Ridge), Texas, was scheduled to make the trip. In addition, three junior college defensive linemen currently plan to spend the Thanksgiving holiday in Nebraska.

Shukree Barfield, a 6-4, 310-pound defensive tackle from Garden City (Kan.) Community College was to

NEBRASKA COMMITMENTS FOR 2007

Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	40	Hometown (School)
Anthony Blue	DB	5-10	172	4.57	Cedar Hill, Texas
Quentin Castille	RB	6-1	234	4.6	La Porte, Texas
Jared Crick	DE	6-6	245	4.8	Cozad, Neb.
Demetrious Davis	DT	6-2	286	5.22	St. Joseph, Mo. (Benton)
Jared Glover	DE	6-5	220	4.75	Bixby, Okla.
Patrick Grant	DE	6-4	220	4.51	Lauderdale Lakes, Fla. (Boyd Anderson)
Ian Harris	TE	6-3	217	4.76	San Antonio, Texas (Churchill)
Roy Helu	RB	5-11	206	4.62	Danville, Calif. (San Ramon Valley)
Ryan Hill	TE	6-3	230	4.7	Arvada, Colo. (West)
Adi Kunalic	K	6-0	175	4.67	Fort Worth, Texas (North Crowley)
Blake Lawrence	LB	6-2	199	4.65	Overland Park, Kan. (Shawnee Mission West)
Zac Lee	QB	6-2	200	4.6	San Francisco, Calif. (St. Ignatius/ City College of San Francisco)
Travis Lewis	LB	6-1	213	4.34	San Antonio, Texas (Lee)
Niles Paul	WR	6-2	210	4.4	Omaha, Neb. (North)
Shawn Sullivan	DB	5-11	182	4.4	Brenham, Texas
DeAndre West	DB	6-1	195	4.4	Oakland, Calif. (Wilson Prep)
Patrick Witt	QB	6-4	215	4.95	Wylie, Texas

For more daily recruiting information, visit HuskersIllustrated.com, a member of the Rivals.com network.

travel to Lincoln with his teammate, 6-3, 292-pound defensive tackle Kevin Dixon. Rated the No. 22 junior college prospect in the country (four-stars) by Rivals.com, Barfield brings good size and athleticism (4.9-second 40-yard dash) to the defensive interior. Dixon, who committed to South Florida in late summer, brings outstanding strength (380-pound bench press/490-pound squat) to the position.

Brandon Sharpe, a 6-4, 240-pound defensive end prospect out of Fresno (Calif.) Community College was also slated to be in Lincoln. A former teammate of Husker starting cornerback Andre Jones, Sharpe brings good speed (4.7 40) off of the edge.

As for Perry, he admits that the recent rumors of a pending coaching change in Miami have him seriously rethinking his original decision. A good visit to Lincoln could tip the scales in favor of the Huskers.

"Me and Coach (John) Blake have a good relationship, and I trust him," Perry said.

"He can relate to the stuff I'm going through a whole lot. I want to go up there (Nebraska) and see if I like it or not. I know they have a good D-line, so I want to see how they practice, see what my comfort level with the community is, and meet their academic people and whatever."

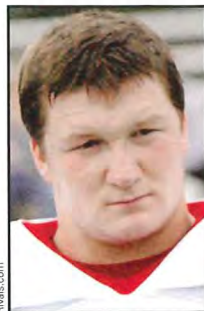
"As far as Coach (Larry) Coker's job situation at Miami, yeah it's going to get bad if he gets fired. It will change me a lot if that happens."

At least four offensive linemen also were expected to watch the Huskers play the Buffaloes. Two of those prospects are current commits to other schools.

Bryan Bulaga, a 6-5, 270-pound offensive tackle prospect out of Woodstock (Marian Central Catholic), Ill., was on the visitor list. Bulaga, rated as a four-star prospect and one of the nation's top 100 players by Rivals.com, delivered a commitment to Iowa back in May. Though still



Chris Perry



Bryan Bulaga

RECRUITING NOTES

Huskers Add a Second QB

By Sean Stevens

Nebraska came into the 2007 recruiting season looking to sign two quarterbacks. Patrick Witt was the first to commit during the summer, and in mid-November, Californian Zac Lee of City College of San Francisco became quarterback No. 2.

Lee had only the offer from Nebraska; however, he was receiving recruiting interest from Mississippi State, Utah and a number of schools in the Pac-10 Conference. He will enroll in January and go through spring practices, as will Witt, to get a jump start on their Husker careers.

"I'm not coming in there with anything handed to me," said Lee. "I'm looking forward to it. I'm sure they do some things similar. I'm sure the language they use is a little different, but I'm sure there is some similar stuff."

JCGridiron.com ranks Lee as the No. 2 junior college quarterback in the country.

● Texas recruiting has had a renewed emphasis this season for the Huskers, and they've cashed in on their hard work with seven oral commitments already in hand. Recent games at Oklahoma State and Texas A&M gave the Nebraska coaches an opportunity to leave a day early and scout in person some of the top prospects in the Lone Star State.

One of those players became oral commitment No. 6 from the state on Nov. 11. Rivals.com's No. 9-ranked kicker nationally — 6-foot, 175-pound Adi Kunalic of Fort Worth — added his name to the Huskers' list.

"It is a great football program and it is not as far from home," he said. "I don't think I am going to get any bigger offers than this, so I'm ready to play football, and Nebraska will be perfect."

● A position of need for the this year is outside linebacker, and Nebraska took a step toward filling that need the week of Thanksgiving as Travis Lewis (6-2, 220, 4.4), the No. 46-ranked player in the Texas, picked the Huskers over Oklahoma.

"In the end, Nebraska just felt like the right place," he said.

Lewis could play either outside linebacker or safety in college. "I don't really have a preference," Lewis said. "I'll play wherever they want me to play."

● Along with Lewis, Arlington athlete Victor Reynolds is another Texas prospect NU is looking at. Reynolds relocated from Wisconsin before his senior season and has had a successful year. He talked about the differences in football in those two states.

"It's a lot different from Wisconsin," the 6-0, 195-pound Reynolds said. "The game preparation and game speed are more serious down here. Everything is a little bigger, and the game is faster. There are a lot of great athletes in every game. There's just so much talent down here."

Reynolds, also an accomplished long jumper, has had the Huskers at the top for a while now.

"It's Nebraska, and then probably Missouri and then Iowa. That's probably my top three right now," he said. ■



Zac Lee



Adi Kunalic



Travis Lewis

committed to the Hawkeyes, the blue-chipper from the "Land of Lincoln" appeared to be, at least, considering other options.

Jack Cornell Jr., a 6-5, 291-pound offensive tackle out of Quincy (Notre Dame), Ill., also planned to make the trip. A commitment to Michigan State since mid-summer, Cornell Jr. is now looking again at Nebraska, Illinois and a handful of other schools.

Offensive guard Jaivorio Burkes (6-4, 310) out of Phoenix (Moon Valley), Ariz., and offensive tackle Marcus Zusevics (6-5, 255) of Mt Prospect, Ill., were also planing to take a long, hard look at Nebraska.

Zusevics, who also is considering scholarship offers from Miami, Michigan State and Purdue, among others, admits that the Huskers sit high atop his list of favorites.

"I'm excited to come in to see the town, take in a game and see how exciting it is there during the football

season," Zusevics said. "I've heard a lot about the atmosphere and how big football is to the people that live there. I'm real excited about Nebraska and have been from the beginning."

The Huskers still hope to land a down-field receiving threat to their tight end corp, and two scheduled Nebraska visitors seemed to fit that definition.

Jacob Amie, a 6-4, 225-pound tight end prospect with 4.59-second speed in the 40-yard dash was scheduled to visit. Amie is currently pledged to Texas Tech but admits that there is a good chance he'll change his mind with an impressive visit to Lincoln.

Coby Fleener, an athletic (4.4 40) 6-6, 215-pound tight end out of Joliet (Catholic), Ill., also planned to travel to Lincoln after he finished turkey dinner on Thanksgiving. Rated a three-star prospect by Rivals.com, Fleener has picked up scholarship offers from Arizona State, Minnesota, Missouri and several others, in addi-



Marcus Zusevics



Jack Cornell Jr.







tion to the Huskers, over the past six weeks. He said he's excited to take a closer look at the Nebraska program.

"I've been talking with Nebraska's coaches for a while now, and I'm really interested to see what Nebraska is all about," Fleener said. "Nebraska and Arizona State are two schools that I'm definitely interested in, but I'm not going to rule anyone out at this point."

In addition to the aforementioned visitors, a handful of other athletes were expected to be in Nebraska on Nov. 24. Running back Prince Amukamara (6-1, 180) out of Glendale (Apollo, Ariz.,) linebacker Brandon Hicks (6-3, 205) of Jacksonville (Forrest), Fla., and sleeper receiver prospect Eric Hagg (6-2, 182) of Peoria (Ironwood), Ariz., were on the visitor list. In addition, four-star linebacker Larry Asante (6-1, 205) of Coffeyville (Kan.) Community College also planned to be in the stands.

NU's class currently ranks 18th, according to Rivals.com. If the Huskers can finish strong, they can establish their class firmly in the nation's top 15 by Signing Day. ■

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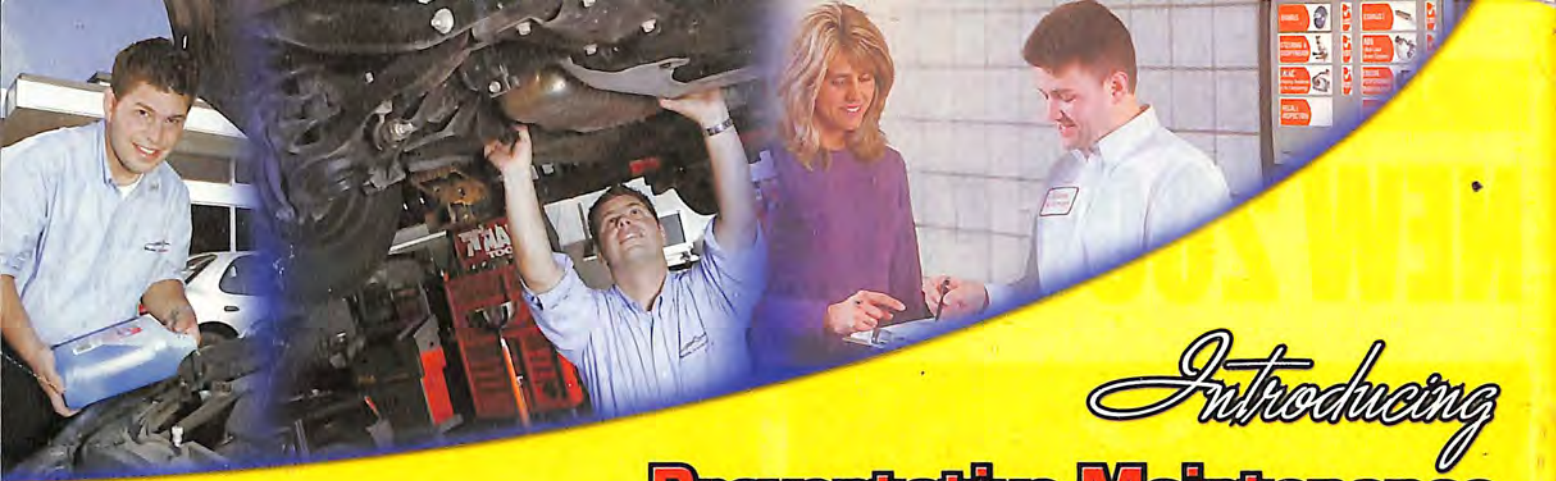
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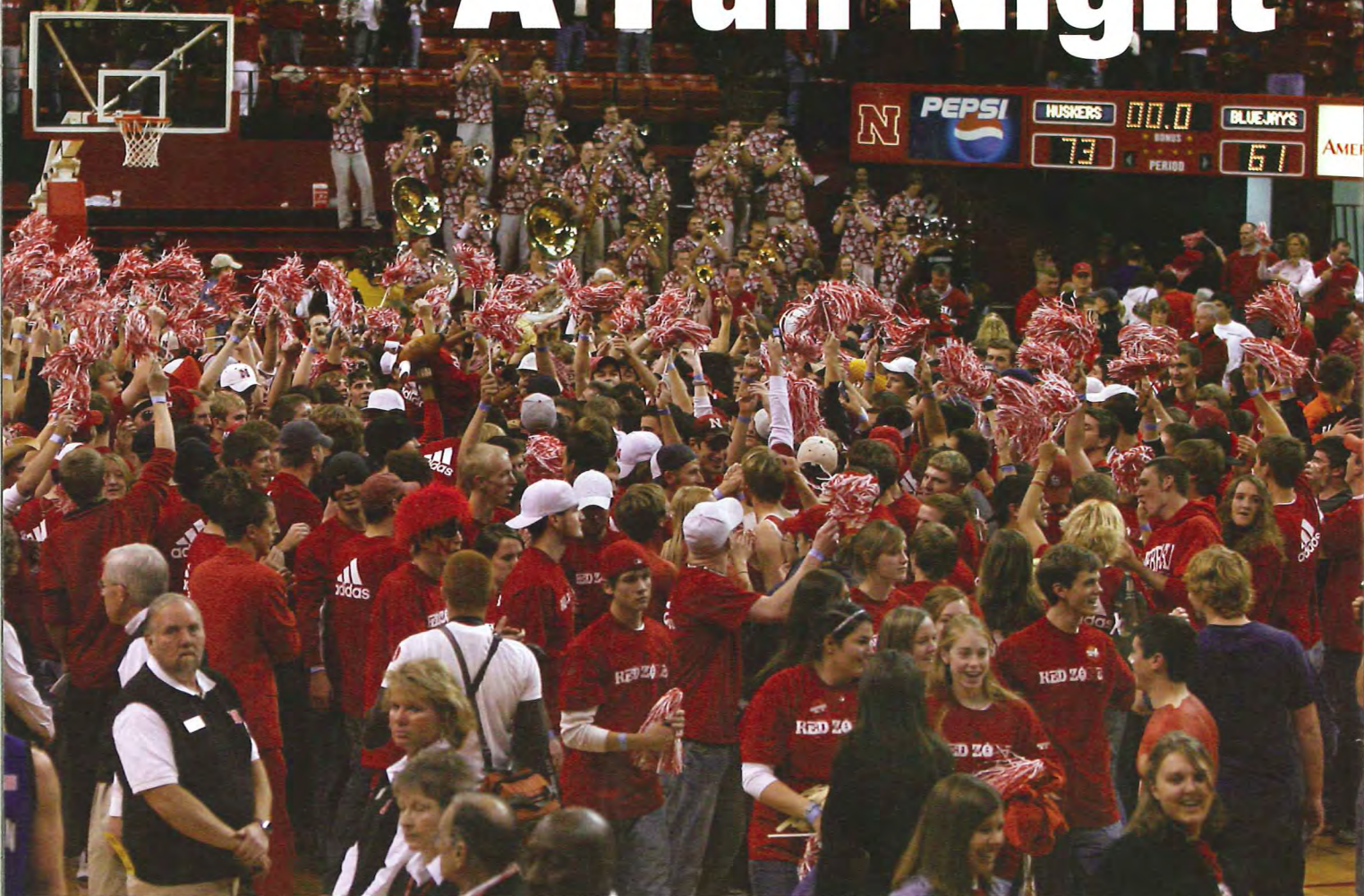
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Fans stream onto the court after Nebraska upset No. 20 Creighton 73-61 in front of a sellout crowd of 13,112 Nov. 18 at the Bob Devaney Sports Center.

Huskers enjoy rare victory over intrastate rival Creighton

With 1:30 remaining and Nebraska holding a 64-57 lead against Creighton, Aleks Maric went to the free throw line. The seven-point lead was hardly comfortable, what with the Bluejays' 3-point shooting and that of guard Nate Funk, in particular. Funk had already hit 6-of-9 from long range.

Despite the circumstances, Cornhusker coach Doc Sadler laughed when the first of two free throws by Maric bounced off the backboard.

Despite the loss of a valuable point, Sadler laughed.

"I mean, 'God, you broke the backboard,' " Sadler explained to reporters afterward.

"You gotta have some fun, guys. I mean, you've got to have some fun. It's important, but at the same time, you've got to have fun. I want our guys to have fun. I want to have fun."

Sadler had fun that night at the Devaney Sports Center, and so did his players, upsetting Creighton 73-61 before a sellout crowd of more than 13,000. The Bluejays came to town with a No. 20 national ranking from the Associated Press and a No. 25 ranking in the USA Today/ESPN coaches' poll.

The victory, only the second for Nebraska in the last nine games against its intrastate rival, was huge. Even though he pointed out that a win or a loss wasn't going to make or break the season for either team, Sadler acknowledged its short-term

importance to his fledgling program.

"Not very many people thought we ever had a chance tonight," he said.

He was pleased with the victory, obviously, "but whew, we've got a lot of work to do," said Sadler. "As I told our players after the game, 'Enjoy it, but come 2 o'clock tomorrow, we're going to have the hardest workout we've had all year.' And that's the way it's going to be."

That's how the Cornhuskers accomplished what they did against Creighton, and that's how they'll continue to improve. The approach isn't all that complicated when you get right down to it.

"He's been preaching all year, since he first got here, you work hard in practice, you make the game situations more easy," senior guard Charles Richardson said. "If we bust our butts for two, three hours in practice, 40 minutes is nothing. We're just going to have to play hard those 40

minutes to win."

Richardson played all 40 minutes against Creighton, the only player on either side to do so. Sadler asked a couple of times if he wanted a break, and Richardson declined.

"He practices that way," Sadler said of his point guard. "What the guys have got to understand and which Charles, as a senior, he does understand it, if you practice that way, then you can play."

"If you practice hard every single day, then you can play extended minutes."

Nebraska needs as many minutes out of Richardson as it can get. "Everybody on our team's important," said Sadler. "But that dude right there is real important."

So is junior Aleks Maric, who missed the Cornhuskers' exhibition games against Nebraska-Kearney and Southern Illinois-Edwardsville following an appendectomy. Maric returned for the season-opening 76-62 victory against Nebraska-Omaha, scoring 29 points and grabbing 10 rebounds.

"Aleks doesn't make much difference in our basketball team. I think that was just something that you saw out there that wasn't significance," Sadler said of Maric's performance.

He was joking, of course. "Obviously, the thing we've talked about from day one, this basketball team has to have everybody," he said. "We're not even close to having everybody."

"But you can tell what one or two guys can make a difference."

MANAGER TODAY, POINT GUARD TOMORROW

Five Cornhuskers were sidelined for the opener: Marcus Perry (knee), Kyle Marks (knee), Chris Balham (legs), Jay-R Strowbridge (leg) and Paul Velander (foot). So four walk-ons suited up, including Andrew Wicklund from Colorado Springs, Colo., Ben Nelson

from Atwater, Minn., Choul Laam from Lincoln, Neb., and Nick Krenk, from Nebraska City, Neb.

Krenk, the son of former Cornhusker football player Mitch Krenk (1981-82), not only suited up, he played 13 minutes, giving Richardson a rest as point guard.

What made Krenk's appearance even more remarkable was that he had only practiced once. A junior, Krenk works in the athletic marketing department. Because he's interested in coaching, he asked if he could be a student manager and had served in that capacity for about a month.

With the team short-handed, he had occasionally been asked to fill in during drills. "I don't know if the coaches saw something or they liked my hustle or what," said Krenk.

He had no idea he would get to play against UNO. "The coaches just told me to be ready, talk to Chuck (Richardson), just make sure I know what's going on and be ready," he said.

"They didn't know if I'd play or not. It's just a phenomenal experience."

Krenk, who had some scholarship offers from small colleges out of high school, dreamed of playing for Nebraska. Whether or not he would play again, "we'll see what happens," he said. "Whatever the coaches need. Whatever it takes the team to do their best. If they want to throw me back at manager tomorrow, hey, it's been a great experience. Whatever works out best for the team."

NO PLACE LIKE NEBRASKA

Andrew Bridger, a freshman from Lincoln, led UNO in scoring with 23 points and earned Sadler's respect. The 6-0 guard was "one of the best players on the floor," said Sadler.

The next day, during the news conference at which his recruiting class was announced, Sadler was asked about Bridger again and whether his play underscored the need to recruit in-state. Nebraska players already were a recruiting priority, Sadler said. "That's been a priority from day one. We're going to recruit everybody. We're going to, obviously, start here in Nebraska, and hopefully we don't lose anybody here in the state, especially in the city. I mean, that's no guarantee. But it's going to be hard to tell us no."

He was reiterating a point he had made after the UNO game. "Those kids play extremely hard, and I think there may be more players in this state than what some people think," he said.

"I've always thought if you'll compete and you'll lay it on the line . . . if you're from Nebraska and you're playing for the University of Nebraska, you will do that more than anyone else." ■



Charles Richardson



Aleks Maric

MEN'S SCHEDULE

Nov. 6	*Nebraska-Kearney, W 74-72
Nov. 11	*SIU-Edwardsville, L 54-50
Nov. 14	Nebraska-Omaha, W 76-62
Nov. 18	Creighton, W, 73-61
Nov. 21	Lubbock Christian, W 65-42
Nov. 27	Arkansas-Pine Bluff
Nov. 29	North Texas (FSN Midwest)
Dec. 2	@Rutgers
Dec. 9	@Oregon (FSN)
Dec. 17	Alabama A&M
Dec. 20	**Wyoming
Dec. 22	**San Francisco/Hawaii
Dec. 23	**TBA
Dec. 30	***Miami (FSN Midwest)
Jan. 3	Savannah State
Jan. 6	Western Kentucky
Jan. 10	@Iowa State (FSN Midwest)
Jan. 13	Oklahoma State (ESPN+)
Jan. 17	@Oklahoma (FSN Midwest)
Jan. 20	Colorado (ESPN+)
Jan. 24	Texas (FSN Midwest)
Jan. 27	@Kansas St. (FSN Midwest)
Jan. 29	Kansas (ESPN)
Feb. 3	@Missouri (ESPN+)
Feb. 6	@Texas Tech (FSN Midwest)
Feb. 10	Texas A&M (FSN Midwest)
Feb. 13	Kansas State (FSN Midwest)
Feb. 17	@Kansas (ESPN+)
Feb. 21	@Baylor (FSN Midwest)
Feb. 24	Missouri (ESPN+)
Feb. 28	Iowa State
Mar. 3	@Colorado (ESPN+)
Mar. 8-11	Big 12 Championship, Oklahoma City

*Exhibition

**Rainbow Classic, Honolulu, Hawaii

***Orange Bowl Classic, Miami, Fla.

WOMEN'S SCHEDULE

Nov. 1	*Nebraska-Kearney, W 122-55
Nov. 4	*Nebraska-Omaha, W 97-59
Nov. 10	**Arizona State, L 87-60
Nov. 12	**Florida Atlantic, W 93-53
Nov. 13	**New Mexico, W 66-59
Nob. 17	Cal State Fullerton
Nov. 24	@UC Irvine
Nov. 26	@USC
Nov. 28	Texas-Pan American
Dec. 5	Minnesota
Dec. 9	Michigan
Dec. 16	Northwestern
Dec. 19	@Creighton (Civic)
Dec. 21	Nicholls State
Dec. 28	***NC State
Dec. 29	***Florida/Alabama State
Jan. 3	@Texas
Jan. 6	Oklahoma
Jan. 13	@Kansas
Jan. 17	Kansas State
Jan. 20	@Missouri
Jan. 24	@Texas A&M
Jan. 27	Kansas
Jan. 31	Iowa State
Feb. 3	Baylor (FSN)
Feb. 7	@Kansas State (FSN Midwest)
Feb. 10	@Colorado (FSN)
Feb. 14	Texas Tech
Feb. 17	Missouri
Feb. 20	@Iowa State FSN Midwest)
Feb. 24	@Oklahoma State
Feb. 27	Colorado
Mar. 6-10	Big 12 Championship, Oklahoma City

*Exhibition

**Veterans Day Classic, Tempe, Ariz.

**Big 12 Tournament, Dallas, Texas

***State Farm Classic, Gainesville, Fla.

A Close Call

Determined Page refused to give in to injury

By KATELYN KERKHOVE

Junior Danielle Page will admit when she gets beat to the basket.

Most of the time, the Nebraska forward will acknowledge her opponent's quick take by attempting, and usually succeeding, to block the ensuing shot.

"I just get her from behind," Page said. "She won't be looking, and it's easier because she won't see me coming. Sometimes it works, but sometimes, I get the foul called on me."

Leading the Cornhuskers with 38 blocked shots last season, Page is a defensive threat Nebraska couldn't have done without this season. But it was a close call.

During a Husker day camp for first-through-sixth graders in July, Page and her teammates decided to entertain the campers with a pick-up game during a lunch break. While jumping up for a lob pass, Page came down on her right leg and felt a quick jerk in her knee.

"It hurt for like 10 seconds, and then it felt fine," Page said. "So I was playing with a little camper the next day, and I went to cross her over, and I ended up on my back. I knew something was wrong then."

While the knee never swelled or popped, an MRI the following day showed Page had torn her right anterior cruciate ligament. That meant at least four months of rehab, something the Huskers found difficult to accept because the roster included only two other post players.

But just like Page refuses to give up a shot to an opponent, she refused to give in to the injury. For the past four months, the 6-foot-2 Page has rehabbed her knee six days a week for two hours a day, and it is paying off. While she is still not 100 percent, she has already proven her value to the



Junior forward Danielle Page, NU's leader in blocked shots the past two seasons, has contributed 5.1 points per game at the offensive end.

Huskers this season.

After sitting out Nebraska's first exhibition victory over Nebraska-Kearney on Nov. 1, she stepped on the court to put in 10 points, grab seven rebounds and block one shot in 15 minutes of play during the Huskers' 97-59 exhibition win over Nebraska-Omaha on Nov. 4.

Since then, she has continued to work her way back into the lineup.

"(Four months) was very unusual, but it's not as unusual if the person works really hard," coach Connie Yori said of Page's return, following

Nebraska's 76-62 win over Cal State Fullerton on Nov. 17. "Danielle worked very hard to rehab from the moment she got hurt to this moment. She has really busted it in the training room."

At this point, Page said she is more likely to worry about her knee during practice than in games. She said the different drills sometimes make her nervous because she has more time to consider the "what ifs."

But senior Jelena Spiric — or "Spin" for short — is there during those moments when Page is feeling timid.

Struggling with a knee injury herself, Spiric worked her way back into top physical form to play her last season at Nebraska. And it was Spiric who answered all of Page's questions.

"Toward the beginning, when I started practice, I was real tentative on it," Page said. "I didn't jump sometimes, and I wouldn't slide on defense as hard as I could. (Spiric) was gone when it happened, but when she came back, I asked her questions like what kind of stuff she did for rehab and what she felt like during practice. She helped me know what to expect and how hard to push it."

With her knee less of an issue than originally thought, Page has set some higher goals for herself this season. Like always, she is determined to be a defensive threat as she considers herself less of an offensive player. Yori and Spiric, on the other hand, said Page has the skills to be extremely effective on the low block and should give herself much more credit as a scorer.

"Of course, she helps us a lot on the defensive end; she is the one that gets most of the boards, but I wouldn't say she's not an offensive threat at all," Spiric said. "I think she has a big inside presence, and when we try to get the ball inside, we won't hesitate if she's there. We want the ball in her hands."

As the Huskers head deeper into the

RECRUITING CLASS

Though their backgrounds are diverse, they have something in common. Each of the five "works hard, has great characters and is a very talented basketball player," Husker women's basketball coach Connie Yori said in announcing the five recruits who signed in the NCAA's early-signing period. "We are extremely pleased with what we expect to be another very good recruiting class."

Dominique Kelley, G, 5-7, Lincoln, Neb. (Northeast)

Ranked among the nation's top 200 players, Kelley has led Northeast to a combined 48-1 record and a Class A state championship in the past two seasons . . . averaged 15.6 points and 4.8 rebounds as a junior, 14.4 points and 4.5 rebounds as a sophomore.

Kaitlyn Burke, G, 5-7, Vancouver, B.C., Canada (National Elite Development Academy)

Second Canadian to play for the Husker women, following Chelsea Aubry . . . most valuable player at the Canadian Under-17 National Championships in 2006 . . . averaged 18 points, six rebounds, 10 assists and five steals in high school.

Jessica Periago, C, 6-4, Toulon, France (National Institute of Sports)

Plans to enroll at Nebraska for second semester but not expected to play until next season, though she'll be eligible to practice with the Huskers . . . also a soccer player . . . long arms, very mobile, runs well, according to Yori.

Catheryn Redmon, F/C, 6-3, Grand Prairie, Texas (Mansfield Timberview)

Last in the group to commit, ranked as the No. 14 post player and No. 59 player overall in the nation by All-Star Girls Report . . . transferred from DeSoto, Texas, High, where she averaged seven points and six rebounds as a sophomore and junior.

Monique Whittaker, G, 5-10, Onalaska, Texas (Livingston)

Averaged 20 points and 10 rebounds as a junior . . . named most valuable player in District 18-4A in 2005-06 after being named district's offensive player of the year as a sophomore . . . also has earned letters in cross country, volleyball, soccer and track and field.

season, Page said the team agrees on one main goal and that is to make it to the NCAA Tournament for the first time under Yori's direction.

"Personally, I just want to get out

there and play solid defense and try and get some blocked shots along the way," Page said. "But I think our overall goal is just to make the tournament, and that's the biggest goal right now." ■

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NU Listening A

Huskers looking to regain momentum entering postseason

By Todd Henrichs

When most coaches suffer losses, their inbox typically fills with messages.

But rarely do such messages take on a sympathetic tone as was the case after top-ranked Nebraska suffered its first loss of the college volleyball season last month at Colorado.

Nebraska head coach John Cook said he even got a phone call from athletic director Steve Pederson to see if he was OK.

"I guess that's because it doesn't happen that often," said Cook, who suffered only the 14th loss of his seven-year tenure at NU. That's measured against more than 200 wins by his Nebraska teams.

"They've been remarkable in how consistent they've been in their performances, so it was a pretty uncomfortable feeling for us," Cook said. "But I'm hoping it will kind of jumpstart some emotions and raise our level of play."

"We'll see."

Nebraska bounced back with consecutive wins over Texas A&M and Baylor to wrap up the Big 12 championship, the Huskers' ninth title in the 11-year history of the league.

Efficient efforts on offense in both wins also served to heighten the Huskers' confidence entering what you might say will be the most-watched of all postseason runs in Nebraska volleyball history.

Why? Because so many Nebraska fans already have snatched up tickets for the first-ever final four to be played in Omaha. If the Huskers can make it that far, the weekend of Dec. 14-16 figures to be a winter carnival in the Cornhusker State.

If they don't, there's no doubt that

fans at Qwest Center Omaha will be left with somewhat of an empty feeling watching other teams play for at national championship.

"There's a lot yet to play for," Cook said.

The five-game loss at Colorado, a match in which Nebraska for the most part dominated statistically, had a far different feel to it than last year's lone regular-season loss to Texas, players said.

The Texas defeat came on the final night of the regular season, after Nebraska had long secured the Big 12 regular-season title and the Huskers knew they would be a No. 1 seed and playing in the Omaha regional in hopes of arriving at the final four.

This year's loss, however, coming with still two weeks of the regular season remaining, set off alarms. Foremost were concerns that the loss came to an unranked opponent, a Colorado team that really hasn't challenged Nebraska in the last 10 years.

"We're a talented team, but we've got to become a team that plays with that heart and emotion," Cook said following the rare setback. "In that sense, it's a great teaching opportunity. I've been talking about all the things that caught up with us — but they weren't hearing it."

"Now they're listening."

To that end, Cook turned to another sport to show his team what it would take to live up to their dreams of finishing the season in Omaha. He showed the Huskers the intricacies of a pit stop.

"In NASCAR, they're just trying to find one more mile an hour by fine-tuning, and that's what we need to be doing," he said. "We haven't been doing things at the level we need to be doing them at and it caught up with



us at Colorado."

Sarah Pavan, who struggled at times in the loss, rebounded with two of her best matches of the season. The junior middle blocker is on a pace to challenge Nebraska's single-season record for kills per game set by Nancy Metcalf back in 1999.

Senior libero Dani Busboom could become the Huskers' single-season

Scott Bruhn

After Rare Loss



Nebraska sophomore Jordan Larson (10) was the only player in the Big 12 ranked among the top 10 in kills, service aces, digs and points per game.

leader in digs per game this season, and junior middle blocker Tracy Stalls could set the Big 12 record for hitting percentage.

Nebraska's best all-around player, however, might be Jordan Larson, the sophomore outside hitter who has contributed in so many ways. She fin-

ished the regular season as the only player in the Big 12 to be ranked among the top 10 in kills, service aces, digs and points per game.

Larson, who days later still showed signs that the loss was stinging, said she believes that the Huskers got the message.

"I was kind of frustrated as a player because I just like to play like I know we can," she said. "But we're going to come out and turn it around and take it into the tournament.

"I think it's going to be a great learning experience for all of us." ■

Todd Henrichs covers the Nebraska volleyball team for the Lincoln Journal Star. He can be reached at 473-7439 or thenrichs@journalstar.com

RESULTS, SCHEDULE

Aug. 29 San Diego W 3-0

Labor Day Tournament At Lincoln, Neb.

Sept. 1 St. Mary's W 3-0
Sept. 2 Middle Tennessee St. W 3-0
Sept. 3 Long Beach State W 3-0

Players Challenge At Lincoln, Neb.

Sept. 8 Louisville W 3-0
Sept. 9 Cal Poly W 3-0
Sept. 10 Minnesota W 3-1

Sept. 13 Kansas W 3-0
Sept. 16 @Oklahoma W 3-0
Sept. 20 Iowa State W 3-0
Sept. 23 Texas Tech W 3-0
Sept. 24 @Creighton W 3-1
Sept. 30 @Baylor W 3-1
Oct. 4 Kansas State W 3-0
Oct. 7 @Texas A&M W 3-0
Oct. 11 @Missouri W 3-0
Oct. 14 Colorado W 3-0
Oct. 18 @Texas W 3-2
Oct. 25 Missouri W 3-0
Oct. 28 @Kansas State W 3-0
Nov. 1 @Texas Tech W 3-0
Nov. 4 Oklahoma W 3-0
Nov. 8 @Iowa State W 3-1
Nov. 11 @Colorado L 3-2
Nov. 15 Texas A&M W 3-0
Nov. 18 Baylor 7 p.m. W 3-0
Nov. 22 @Kansas 7 p.m.
Nov. 25 Texas 7 p.m.

Nov. 30-Dec. 3 NCAA First/Second Rounds At Campus Sites

Dec. 8-9 NCAA Regionals At Campus Sites

Dec 14-16 NCAA Final Four At Qwest Center (Omaha, Neb.)

CROSSWORD

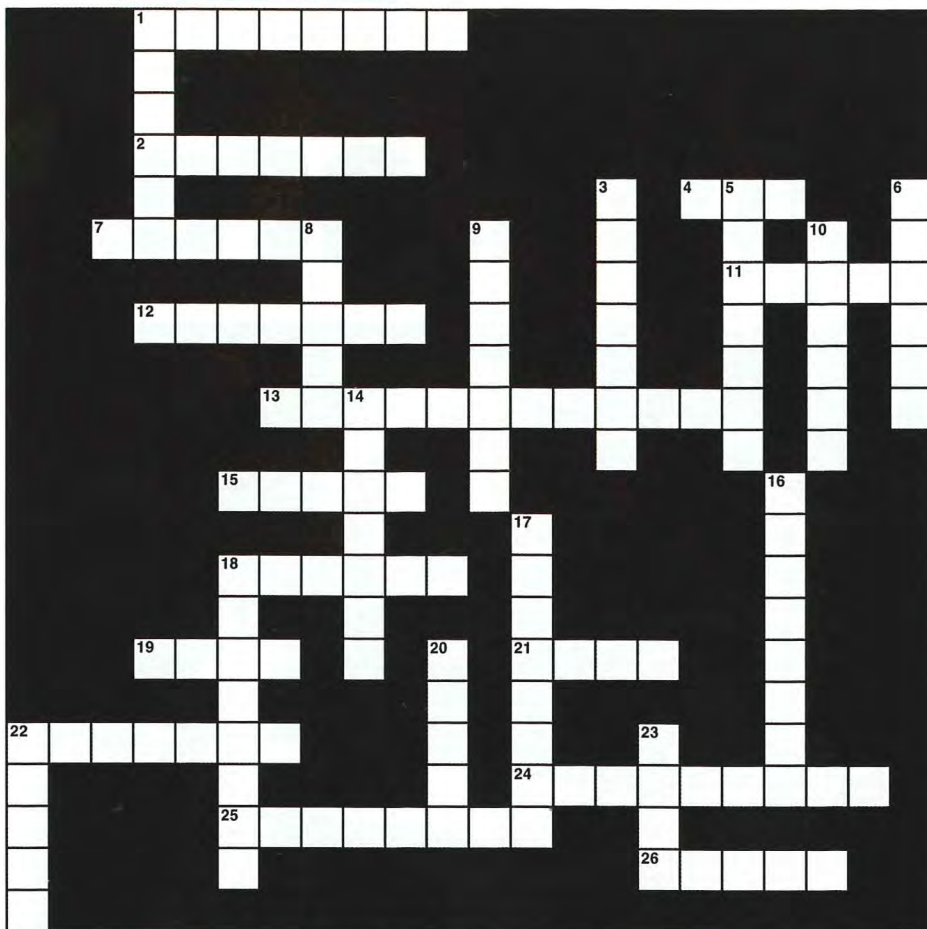
ACROSS

- 1 Winner in 1999 Big 12 title game
- 2 1993 Butkus Award winner
- 4 Network for Big 12 title game
- 7 Ex-Husker assistant now at Minnesota State
- 11 NU's 2005 bowl game
- 12 Wears No. 6
- 13 NU's 2002 bowl game
- 15 Texas head coach
- 18 Caught winning TD pass vs. Texas A&M
- 19 Frank Solich's current school
- 21 Wears No. 4
- 22 Turner Gill's current school
- 24 Stadium for Big 12 title game
- 25 Leading receiver vs. Texas A&M
- 26 Leading rusher vs. Texas A&M

DOWN

- 1 Opponent in 2007 opener
- 3 1995 Heisman Trophy runner-up
- 5 Leading tackler vs. Texas A&M
- 6 Oklahoma head coach
- 8 Ran for 2 TDs vs. Texas A&M
- 9 Big 12 commissioner
- 10 Holds school record for career passing yards
- 14 Ex-Husker assistant now at Northern Colorado
- 16 Wears No. 3
- 17 NU's 2005 bowl opponent
- 18 Tight end from Texas
- 20 Winner in 2005 Big 12 title game
- 22 Wore retired No. 64
- 23 Ex-Husker assistant now at North Dakota State

Answers in January issue



HUSKERNUTZ



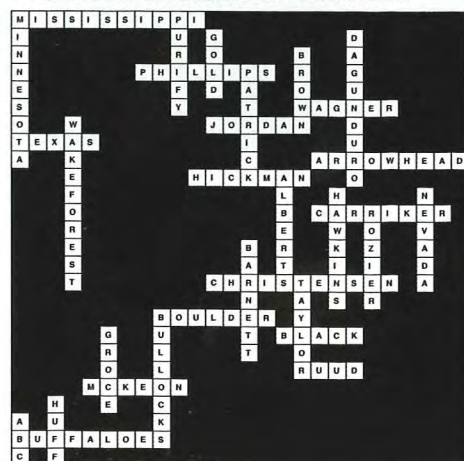
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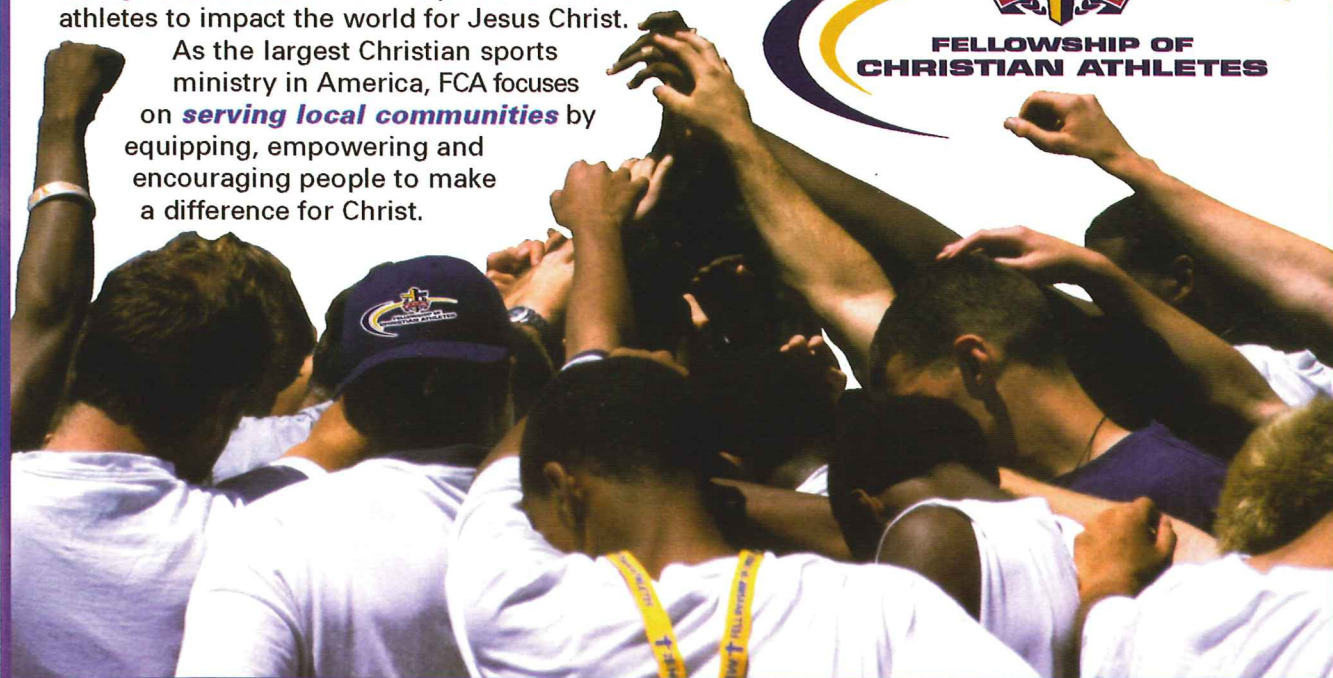
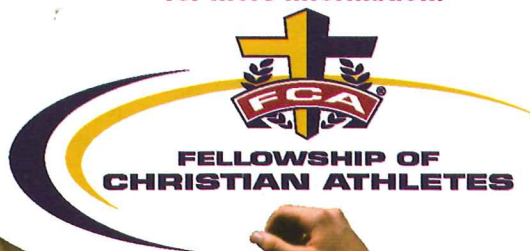
Nebraska Media Relations

Nebraska athletes (from left) J.B. Phillips (football), Jacy Wicker (soccer) and Bryce Nimmo (baseball) spoke to students at Scott Middle School in Lincoln Nov. 17 as part of National American Education Week. A total of 48 Husker student-athletes volunteered to speak at eight Lincoln middle schools about the importance of education.

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Not Just Tricks

Senior Carriker says Huskers 'getting back to where we should be'



Mike BABCOCK

THE CATCH was of the rub-your-eyes-and-look-again variety. Maurice Purify grabbed the ball with his left hand and secured it, in spite of Colorado cornerback Terry Washington.

Washington did what he could to prevent Purify from catching the pass. About the only thing he could do was interfere. And that, of course, didn't work. Nebraska declined the penalty and took the play, which was good for a 31-yard gain and a first down at the Buffaloes' 26-yard line.

The reception, midway through the third quarter, was Purify's first of the game and preceded the touchdown with which the Cornhuskers took a lead they wouldn't relinquish.

"It was a great catch," Cornhusker coach Bill Callahan said afterward.

Purify had figured prominently in the game plan. But Nebraska "squandered opportunities" to get him the ball in the first half, said Callahan. "But in the second half, he did make some fine plays.

"We were definitely isolating him and trying to get him matched up with the right match-up on defense. So those plays he made were huge, especially the third down square-out."

Purify would catch two more passes, both for 10-yard gains and first downs. So what else is new? Just about everything the junior wide receiver touches turns to a first down or a touchdown.

On a day when seniors and trick plays were the topics of discussion, Purify's performance was a reminder the Cornhuskers don't need trickery for victories; they can make plays, too.

And they'll have to in the Big 12 championship game against Oklahoma.

As it turns out, Nebraska won't get its rematch with Texas. The Longhorns squandered their opportunity to go to Kansas City by losing to Texas A&M, in Austin, 12-7. They still could have backed into the championship game had Oklahoma lost to Oklahoma State the next day.

But the Sooners took care of business, 27-21, and in so doing, set up a title game traditionalists can appreciate — a rivalry the Big 12 Conference has relegated to twice every four years.

They also provided Cornhusker quarterback Zac Taylor with another chance to play against the program he grew up watching, the program for which his dad, Sherwood, played.

Following the Colorado game, Taylor was asked the obligatory question: Would you rather play Oklahoma or Texas? And he gave the obligatory answer: It doesn't matter.

Even if it were going to be Oklahoma, "we went through

the same stuff last year," he said.

"You don't play any differently. You don't prepare any differently. You might have a couple of more people you know at the game, but other than that . . ."

One by one, the Cornhuskers claimed they didn't care whom they would play at Arrowhead Stadium. What mattered was they would be there, for the first time since 1999.

Defensive end Adam Carriker, who grew up a Nebraska football fan in Kennewick, Wash., was asked if the 9-3 Cornhuskers had restored the order in their third season under Callahan.

"It's just a mind frame," he said. "Growing up, Nebraska pretty much ran through the Big Eight, and it was always Nebraska-Oklahoma for the title. We're getting back to where we should be, on top in the North (Division), getting back to where Nebraska should be, tradition and whatnot."

So were the Cornhuskers officially back, he was asked. "I would say winning the Big 12 championship would be a huge step," he said. "That's definitely a huge goal."

Carriker, Taylor and Zack Bowman, who has missed the season because of a knee injury, went with Callahan to Kansas City for the Big 12 media days in July, and while they were there visited Arrowhead Stadium. "We made a vow to get back there," said Carriker. "We took a picture of that."

Winning the North Division "was a goal we expected to attain," he said.

What was a great expectation at the beginning of the season was realized with a dramatic victory

at Texas A&M two weeks before. But the fact that the Cornhuskers wrapped up the division title at College Station didn't diminish the importance of winning against Colorado.

"We want that kind of momentum," middle linebacker Corey McKeon said. "We don't want to have Colorado, a 2-9 team, come in and beat us. If you want to be an efficient program, you can't let teams like that sneak in and beat you in your own place." So it was a "big game."

Jay Moore, one of the 19 seniors recognized, said the Senior Day experience wasn't overly emotional for him. "It's the way you'd like to go out," he said. But "you've got bigger and better things to look forward to. So it's kind of hard to focus on this one (game)."

Carriker, another of the seniors, was asked to identify one memory from his Cornhusker career to that point. The comeback victory against Michigan in the Alamo Bowl game, he said. However, "there are some big memories that can be made in the next couple of weeks."

For those memories, winning the Big 12 title and going to the Fiesta Bowl, Cornhuskers will have to step up and make plays the way Purify did on that third down. Trickery alone won't do. ■



Maurice Purify's first catch against Colorado was a memorable one.

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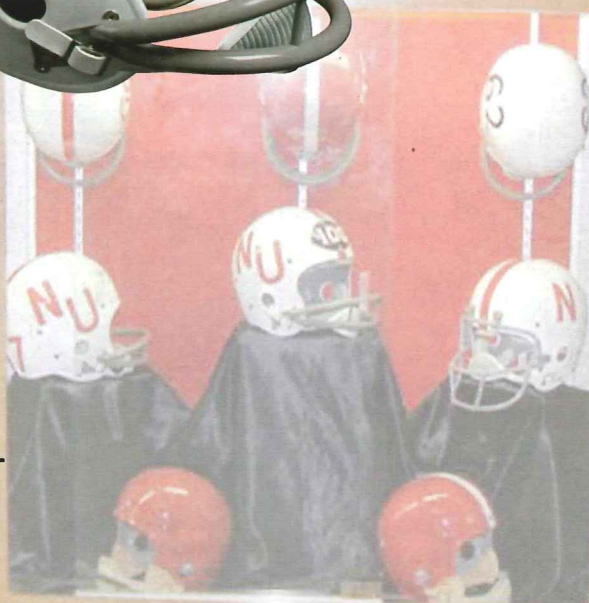
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1953-1956



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